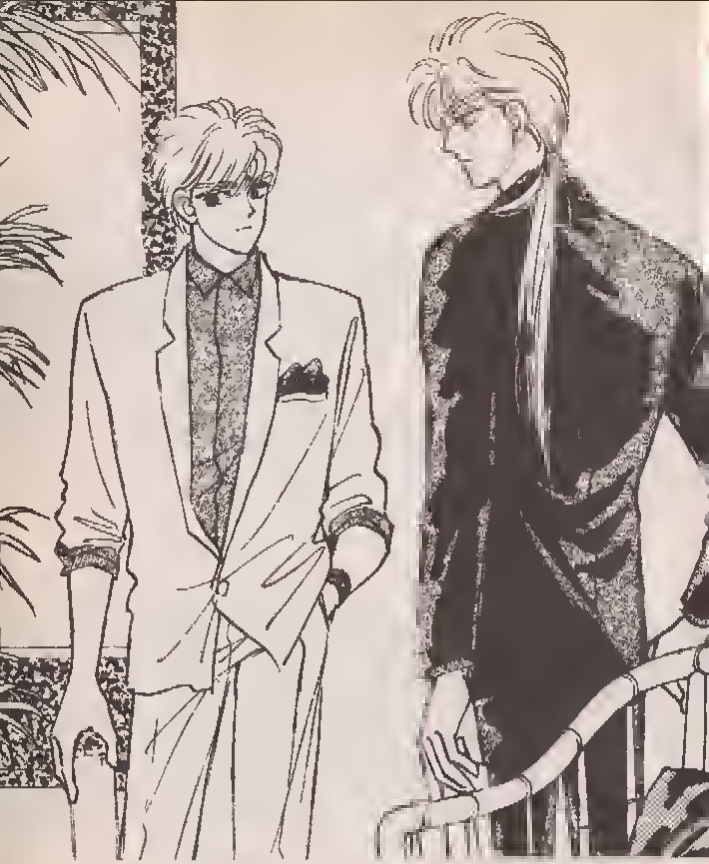

CIPHER

Volume 4 **By Minako Narita**

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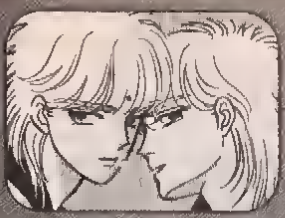

Siva & Cipher

Siva (Jeka) & Cipher (Roy) identical twin brothers made famous by their childhood acting success. Now, they share not just a face but a single identity. Trading off attending school and acting auditions, it is nearly impossible to tell them apart. Or is it?

Anise

Schoolmate and good friend of Siva (Jeka) and Cipher (Roy). She is the twins' only contemporary who knows the truth behind their secret. Although she is close with both brothers, it seems that something more is growing between her and Cipher.

Rob

Anise's dad, who she lives with. He is very supportive of his daughter and encourages her independence. But he's keeping a typical father's concerned eye on her evolving relationship with Cipher (Roy).

Ruth

Anise's best friend and fellow schoolmate. Her style is constantly evolving, perhaps in an effort to make herself more noticeable to a certain someone who seems to only have time for Anise. Her feelings for Siva are a secret, much like the twins' identity.

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I LOOK THE SAME AS I ALWAYS HAVE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "HUH?"
I SHOWED HER THE PHOTO.
THE SHOTS I TOOK SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE
WHAT'S UP?
WELL, YES
I GUESS THEY DO LOOK A LITTLE...
...IT'S JUST A LITTLE... DIFFERENT THAN USUAL, DON'T YOU THINK?
BUT STILL ?

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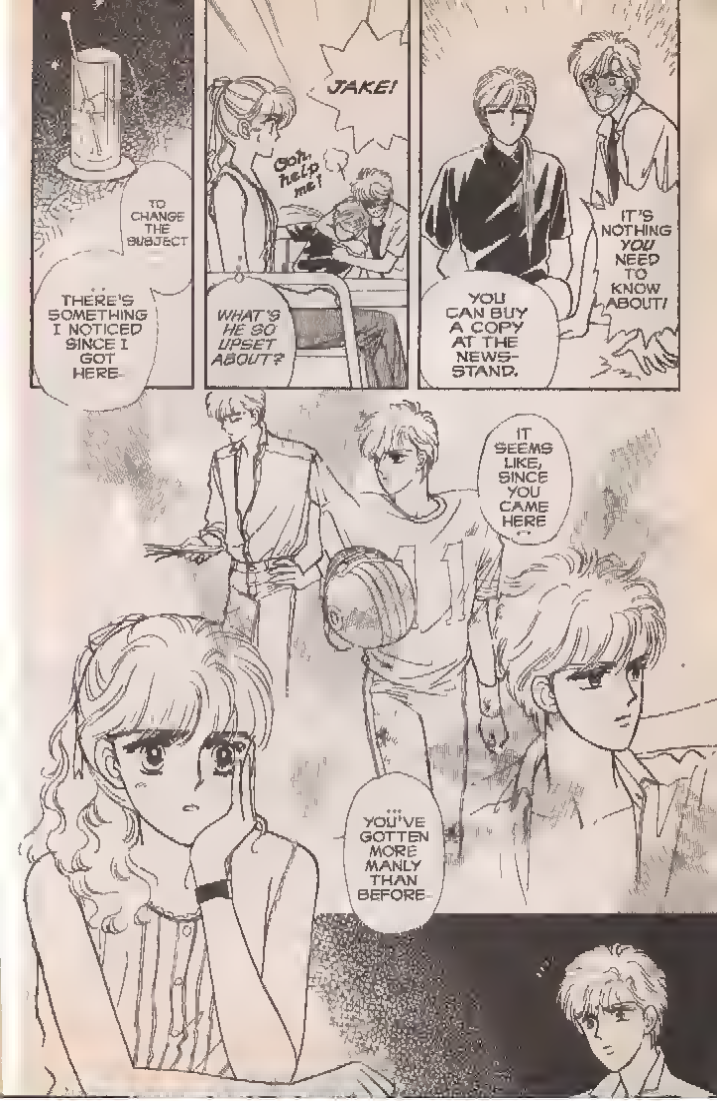
TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT
THERE'S SOMETHING I NOTICED SINCE I GOT HERE...
JAKE!
Ooh, help me!
WHAT'S HE SO UPSET ABOUT?
YOU CAN BUY A COPY AT THE NEWS-STAND.
IT'S NOTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT!
IT SEEMS LIKE, SINCE YOU CAME HERE...
...YOU'VE GOTTEN MORE MANLY THAN BEFORE.

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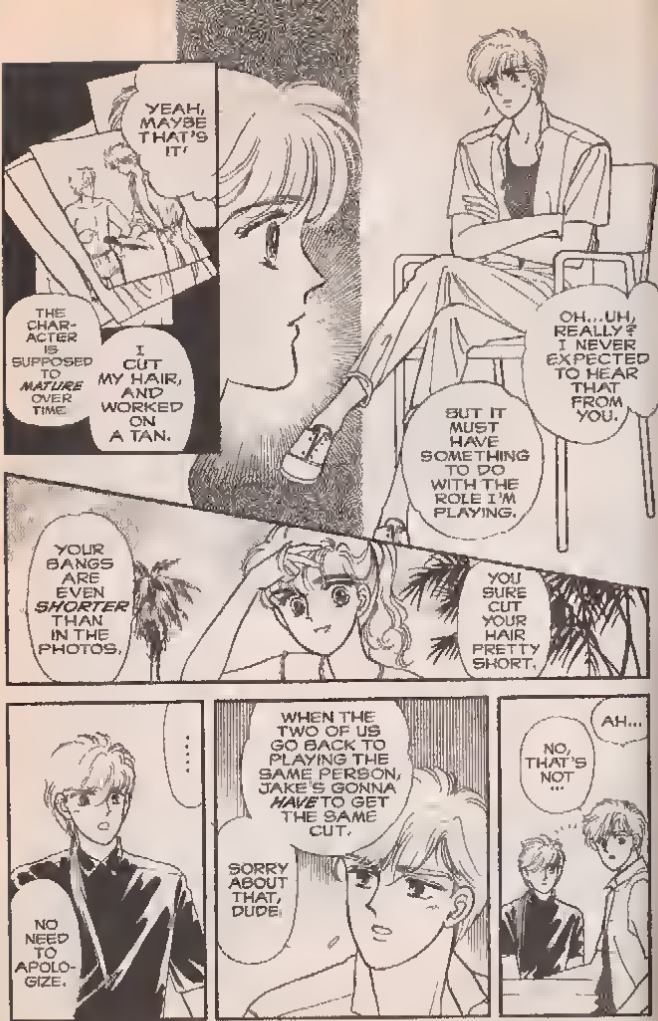
YEAH, MAYBE THAT'S IT.
THE CHARACTER IS SUPPOSED TO MATURE OVER TIME.
I CUT MY HAIR, AND WORKED ON A TAN.
OH...UH, REALLY? I NEVER EXPECTED TO HEAR THAT FROM YOU.
BUT IT MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE ROLE I'M PLAYING.
YOUR BANGS ARE EVEN SHORTER THAN IN THE PHOTOS.
YOU SURE CUT YOUR HAIR PRETTY SHORT.
.....
NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE.
WHEN THE TWO OF US GO BACK TO PLAYING THE SAME PERSON, JAKE'S GONNA HAVE TO GET THE SAME CUT.
SORRY ABOUT THAT, DUDE.
AH...
NO, THAT'S NOT ...

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?
Blushing brothers
I WANT TO TELL MY FRIENDS ABOUT THE CAMPING TRIP. THEN I WANT TO HANG OUT FOR THE REST OF THE VACATION!
HA HA HA! THAT'S OUR GIRL!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANISE?
YEAH, WE'LL BE LATE FOR THE NEXT SEMESTER.
I'M GOING HOME SOON.
BUT YOU'VE STILL GOT A WHILE BEFORE THE TWO OF YOU BECOME "SIVA" AGAIN, RIGHT?
IT LOOKS LIKE THE FILMING WILL STILL TAKE A WHILE LONGER.
HAVE A NICE TRIP HOME.
SEE YOU IN NEW YORK!

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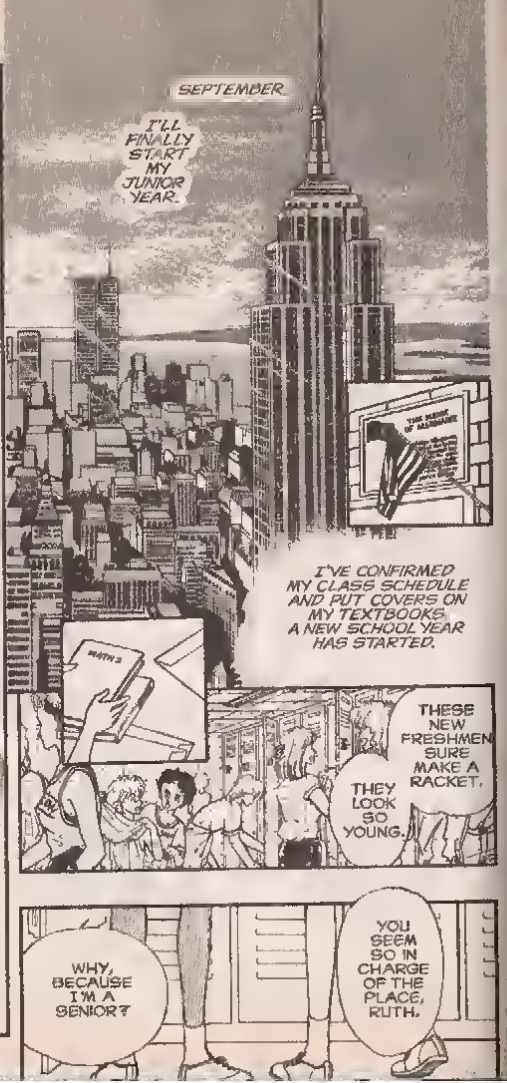
RIGHT NOW, ANISE IS A JUNIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL. IN NEW YORK, JUNIOR HIGH IS TWO YEARS AND SENIOR HIGH IS FOUR YEARS. (PEOPLE WHO FAIL THEIR EXAMS DO THREE YEARS OF JUNIOR HIGH AND THEN FINISH SENIOR HIGH IN THREE YEARS.) IN JAPAN PEOPLE BORN BETWEEN APRIL FIRST AND MARCH THIRTY-FIRST OF THE FOLLOWING YEAR ALL GO IN THE SAME CLASS. BUT AMERICA IS DIFFERENT. THERE EVERYONE BORN BETWEEN JANUARY FIRST AND DECEMBER THIRTY-FIRST OF THE SAME YEAR GO INTO THE SAME CLASS IN SEPTEMBER.

BORN ON OCTOBER 4, 1964. ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL AT 13 YEARS OLD. TURNED 17 RIGHT AFTER SHE STARTED HER SENIOR YEAR. WILL GRADUATE IN JUNE, BEFORE SHE TURNS 18.

BORN ON FEBRUARY 4, 1965. TURNED 19 BEFORE ENTERING HIGH SCHOOL. WILL TURN 18 IN FEBRUARY OF THEIR SENIOR YEAR. WILL GRADUATE IN JUNE. IN ONE HIGH SCHOOL, THERE ARE STUDENTS RANGING FROM 13 TO 19 YEARS OLD. VERY DIFFERENT FROM JAPAN, ISN'T IT?


SEPTEMBER.
I'LL FINALLY START MY JUNIOR YEAR.
I'VE CONFIRMED MY CLASS SCHEDULE AND PUT COVERS ON MY TEXTBOOKS. A NEW SCHOOL YEAR HAS STARTED.
MATH 3
THESE NEW FRESHMEN SURE MAKE A RACKET.
THEY LOOK SO YOUNG.
YOU SEEM SO IN CHARGE OF THE PLACE, RUTH.
WHY, BECAUSE I'M A SENIOR?

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NO, IT'S BECAUSE YOU LOOK SO COOL.
FLIP
REAL-LY? THINK SO?
A FRIEND AND I GOT TOGETHER AND DID EACH OTHER'S HAIR, NEAT, HUH?
WOW... REAL LY?
GUESS THAT EXPLAINS THE NEW LOOK
IS IT TRUE SIVA IS TAKING THIS CLASS, TOO?
HEY, ANISE!
NEL5
COME ON, CLASS IS START-ING.
I THOUGH YOU'D KNOW, ANISE-
THAT'S WHAT I'M ASKING YOU.
WHAT ? SIVA ?!
REALLY?!
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? I'M NOT HIS COUNSELOR!

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IT'S REALLY HIM!
AH!
HEY!
NELSON
I GOT IN LATE LAST NIGHT.
WHEN DID YOU GET BACK?! YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE HERE YET.
HEY, WELCOME BACK.
.....
NELSON
NELSON
Sh-m-sat a-bahr a-cast
WELL, IT'S NOT TOO BAD.
SAME THING HAPPENED BEFORE. I'M SITTING OUT P.E. FOR NOW.
BUT CHECK IT OUT. I SPRAINED MY ANKLE ON THE LAST DAY OF SHOOTING.
WHAT?!

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YOU'RE CIPHER, RIGHT?
MUST HAVE BEEN ROUGH.
PAT PAT
YEAH.
AND THAT'S A GOOD THING?
HE'S JUST TIRED OF ALL THOSE CRAZY FANS AROUND HIM.
I LOVE NEW YORK!
PEOPLE RUSHING AROUND IN THE STREETS WITH SO MUCH ENERGY.
EVEN IF SOMEBODY DIES IN THE STREET, NOBODY STOPS TO LOOK
WELL IN THAT CASE ...
WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST HEAL UP BACK OUT THERE?
I JUST COULDN'T RELAX.
C'MON, EVERYBODY! LINE UP!
GET OVER HERE!
HE LOOKS SO BORED.

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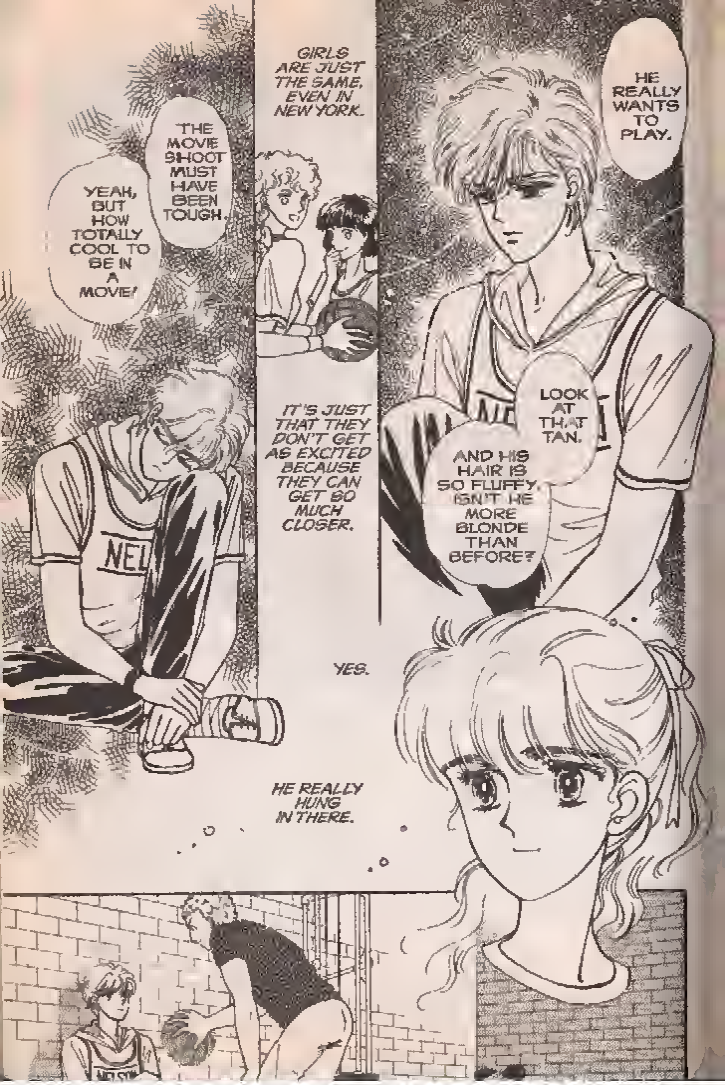
GIRLS ARE JUST THE SAME, EVEN IN NEW YORK.
THE MOVIE SHOOT MUST HAVE BEEN TOUGH.
YEAH, BUT HOW TOTALLY COOL TO BE IN A MOVIE!
HE REALLY WANTS TO PLAY.
LOOK AT THAT TAN.
AND HIS HAIR IS SO FLUFFY. ISN'T HE MORE BLONDE THAN BEFORE?
IT'S JUST THAT THEY DON'T GET AS EXCITED BECAUSE THEY CAN GET SO MUCH CLOSER.
YES.
HE REALLY HUNG IN THERE.

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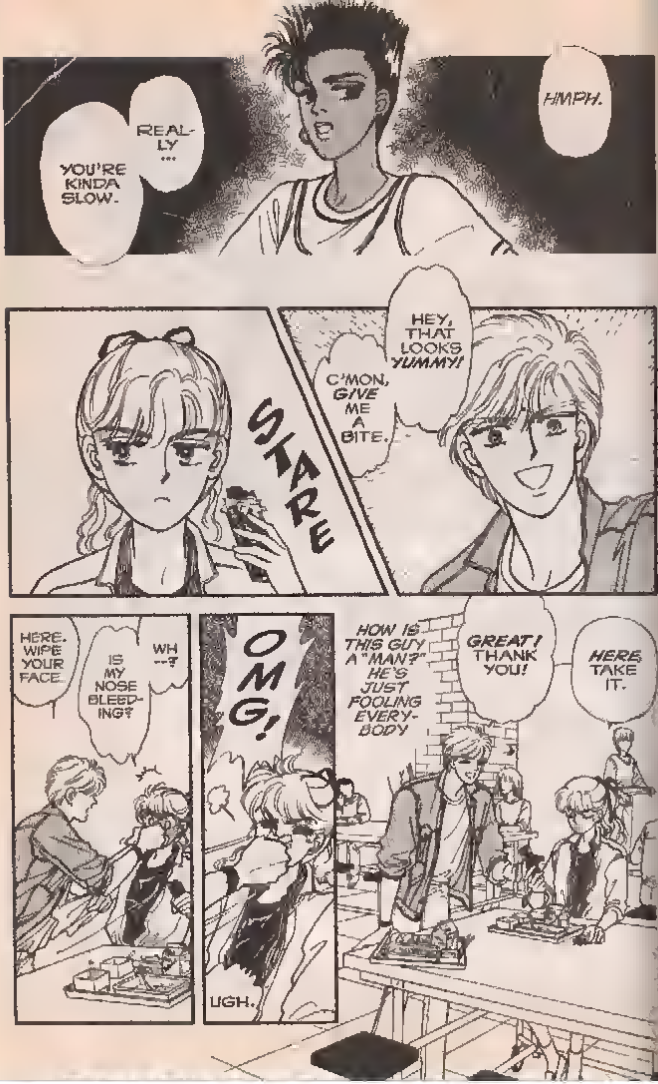

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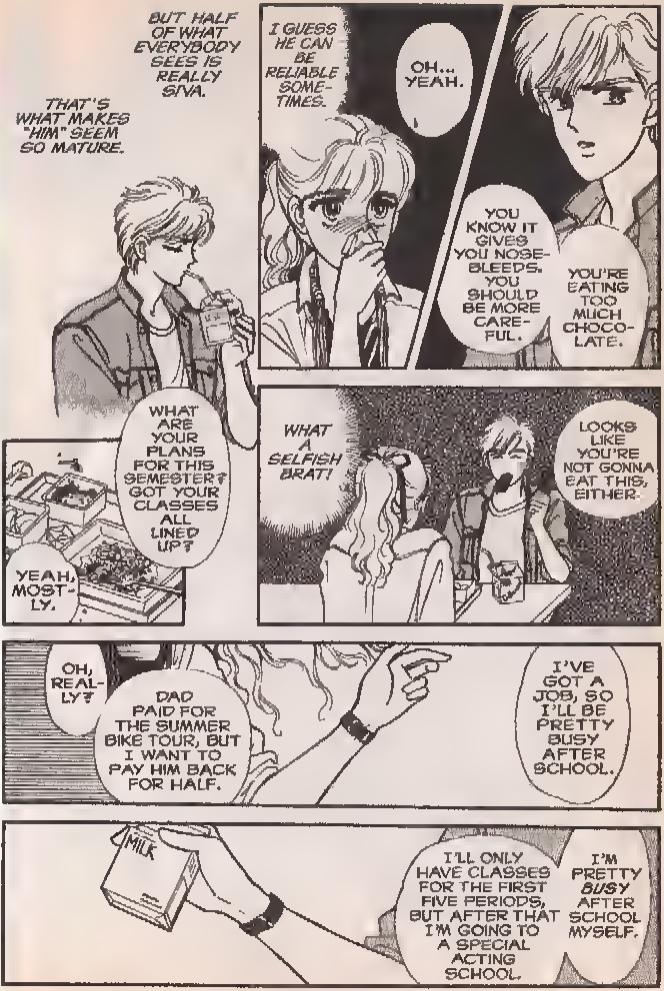
BUT HALF OF WHAT EVERYBODY SEES IS REALLY SIVA.
THAT'S WHAT MAKES "HIM" SEEM SO MATURE.
I GUESS HE CAN BE RELIABLE SOMETIMES.
OH... YEAH.
YOU KNOW IT GIVES YOU NOSEBLEEDS. YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL.
YOU'RE EATING TOO MUCH CHOCOLATE.
WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THIS SEMESTER? GOT YOUR CLASSES ALL LINED UP?
YEAH, MOSTLY.
WHAT A SELFISH BRAT!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE NOT GONNA EAT THIS, EITHER.
OH, REALLY?
DAD PAID FOR THE SUMMER BIKE TOUR, BUT I WANT TO PAY HIM BACK FOR HALF.
I'VE GOT A JOB, SO I'LL BE PRETTY BUSY AFTER SCHOOL.
MILK
I'LL ONLY HAVE CLASSES FOR THE FIRST FIVE PERIODS, BUT AFTER THAT I'M GOING TO A SPECIAL ACTING SCHOOL.
I'M PRETTY BUSY AFTER SCHOOL MYSELF.

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YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT
MINE'S A DIVER'S WATCH. JUST GOT IT.
HEY, WE'VE GOT THE SAME WATCH-BAND.
IT'S NOT THE SAME WATCH IS IT?
HUH?
AND I'M GETTING A LOT OF WORK THESE DAYS.
I'LL ONLY HAVE TIME TO GET SOME REST ON THE WEEK-ENDS.
CHARACTER WATCH!
OW!
OUCH
12:50
THAT'S OKAY! IT'S DIFFERENT FROM YOURS!
UH...
NO...
WHAT'S YOURS, ANISE? LET ME SEE.

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CREAK
THAT'S SUCH A WASTE, SIVA. THE ORANGE COLOR LOOKED SO GOOD ON YOU.
AND YOU TOOK OUT THE PIERC-ING, TOO.
She came over after all.
THE HOLE'S AL-READY CLOSED UP.
HE JUST WOKE UP. HE'S IN THE BATH-ROOM.
WHERE'S CIPHER?
MORN-ING, ANISE.
YOU'RE EARLY
YEAH, OKAY. OPEN THE DOOR
ELLIE'S TRYING TO GET IN THERE. IS IT OKAY?
HEY, CIPHER
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
SLOSH SLOSH

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I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S GOING TO LET ME HAVE THEIR OLD CAR.
IT WILL TAKE ME A MONTH OR TWO TO FIX IT UP.
HUH?
I'LL ASK AROUND ... YOU REALLY LIKE BUYING THINGS!
THAT'S THE KIND OF GUY HE IS.
IT WAS FREE, SO I WON'T COMPLAIN.
Although you'd buy a new car!
ANISE,
DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO CAN RENT ME THEIR GARAGE?
GUESS I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED
EVEN SOME UNDERCLASSMEN ARE ALREADY SHAVING.
HEH HEH HEH
I WANT TO GET ONE LIKE THAT.
THAT JUMPSUIT LOOKS PRETTY NEAT.
THEY'RE NOT GOOD FOR GIRLS.
IT'S INCONVENIENT IN THE TOILET.

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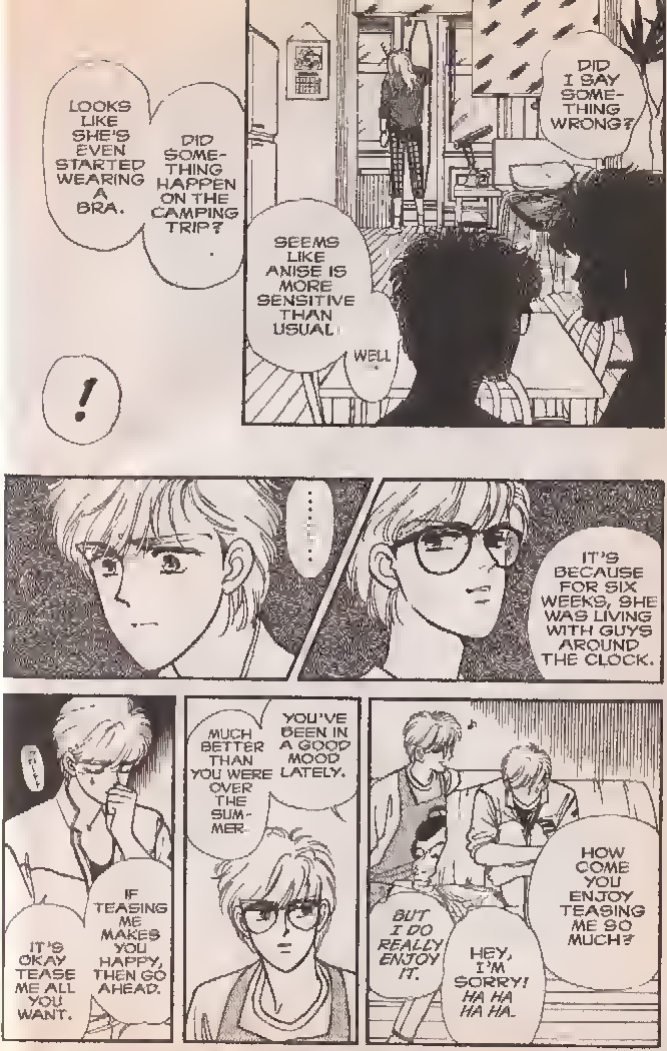
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S EVEN STARTED WEARING A BRA.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN ON THE CAMPING TRIP?
!
SEEMS LIKE ANISE IS MORE SENSITIVE THAN USUAL.
WELL
DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?
.....
IT'S BECAUSE FOR SIX WEEKS, SHE WAS LIVING WITH GUYS AROUND THE CLOCK.
IT'S OKAY TEASE ME ALL YOU WANT.
IF TEASING ME MAKES YOU HAPPY, THEN GO AHEAD.
MUCH BETTER THAN YOU WERE OVER THE SUMMER.
YOU'VE BEEN IN A GOOD MOOD LATELY.
BUT I DO REALLY ENJOY IT.
HEY, I'M SORRY! HA HA HA HA.
HOW COME YOU ENJOY TEASING ME SO MUCH?

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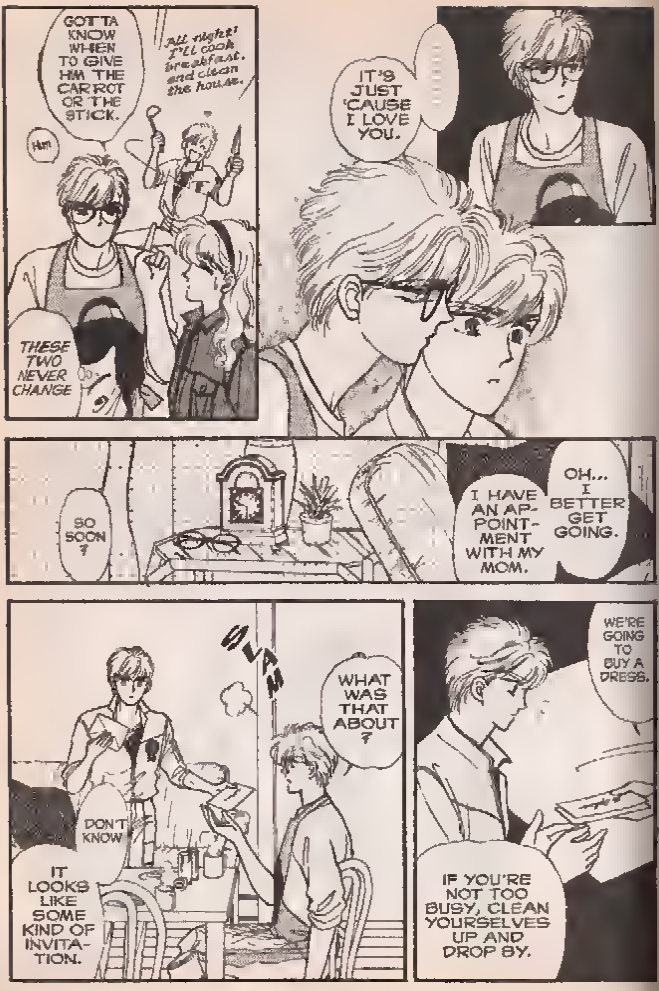
GOTTA KNOW WHEN TO GIVE HIM THE CARROT OR THE STICK.
All right! I'll cook breakfast, and clean the house.
Hm
THESE TWO NEVER CHANGE
IT'S JUST 'CAUSE I LOVE YOU.
SO SOON ?
I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH MY MOM.
OH... I BETTER GET GOING.
SLAM
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT ?
DON'T KNOW
IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF INVITATION.
WE'RE GOING TO BUY A DRESS.
IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BUSY, CLEAN YOURSELVES UP AND DROP BY.

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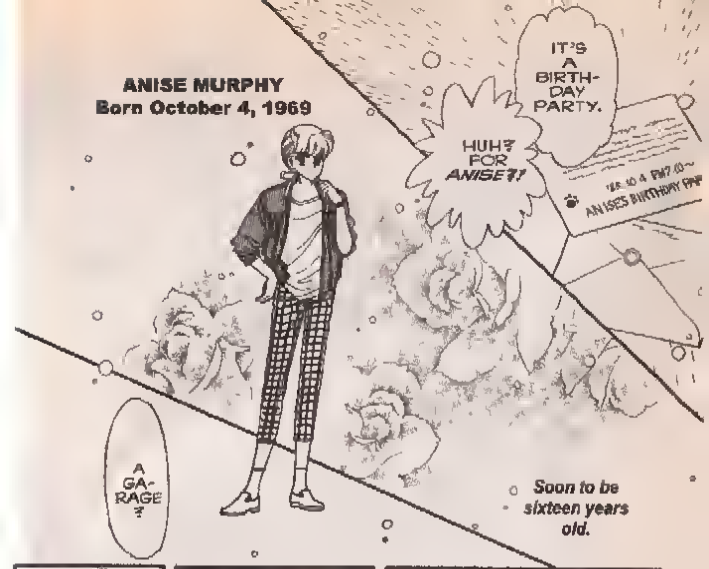
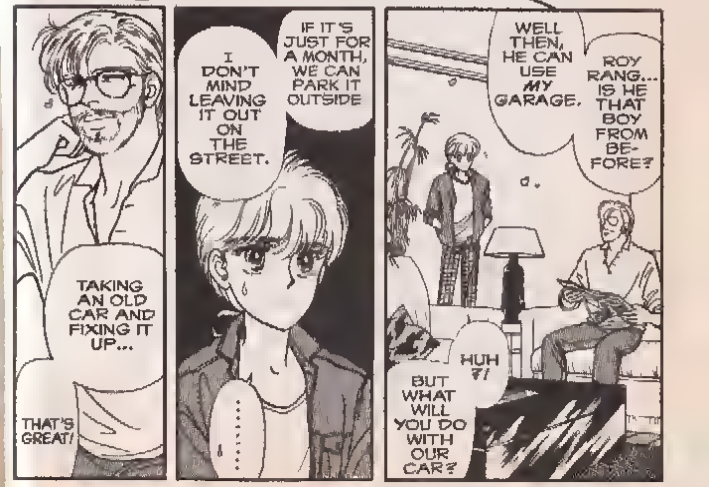
ANISE MURPHY
Born October 4, 1969




TAKING AN OLD CAR AND FIXING IT UP...
THAT'S GREAT!
I DON'T MIND LEAVING IT OUT ON THE STREET.
IF IT'S JUST FOR A MONTH, WE CAN PARK IT OUTSIDE
WELL THEN, HE CAN USE MY GARAGE.
ROY RANG... IS HE THAT BOY FROM BE-FORE?
HUH ?!
BUT WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH OUR CAR?

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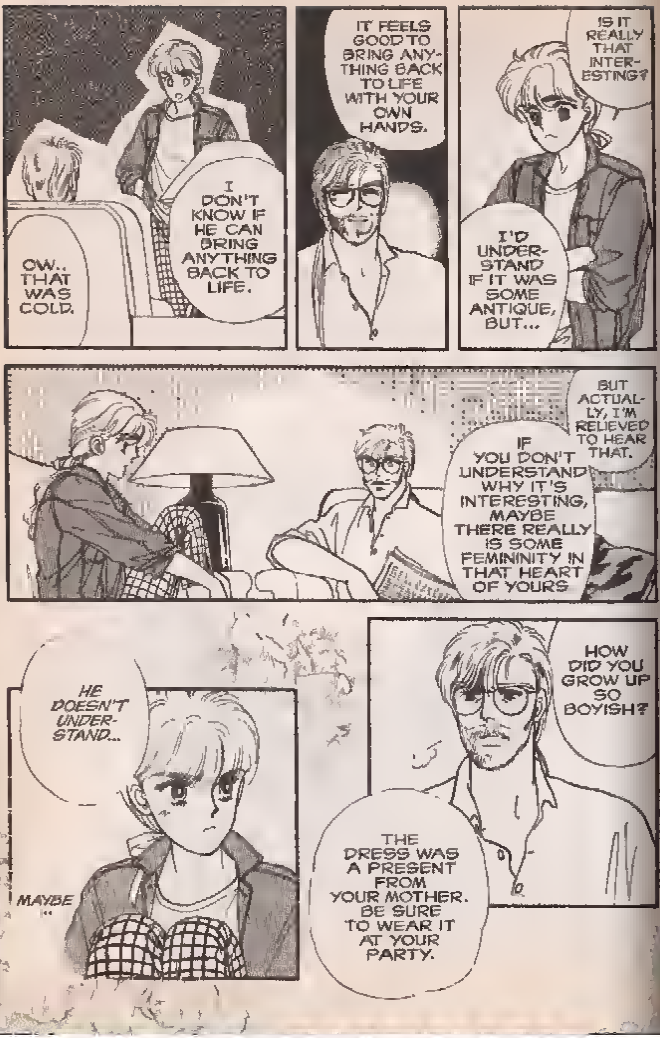
OW.. THAT WAS COLD.
I DON'T KNOW IF HE CAN BRING ANYTHING BACK TO LIFE.
IT FEELS GOOD TO BRING ANYTHING BACK TO LIFE WITH YOUR OWN HANDS.
I'D UNDERSTAND IF IT WAS SOME ANTIQUE, BUT...
IS IT REALLY THAT INTERESTING?
IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY IT'S INTERESTING, MAYBE THERE REALLY IS SOME FEMININITY IN THAT HEART OF YOURS
BUT ACTUALLY, I'M RELIEVED TO HEAR THAT.
HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND...
MAYBE...
THE DRESS WAS A PRESENT FROM YOUR MOTHER. BE SURE TO WEAR IT AT YOUR PARTY.
HOW DID YOU GROW UP SO BOYISH?

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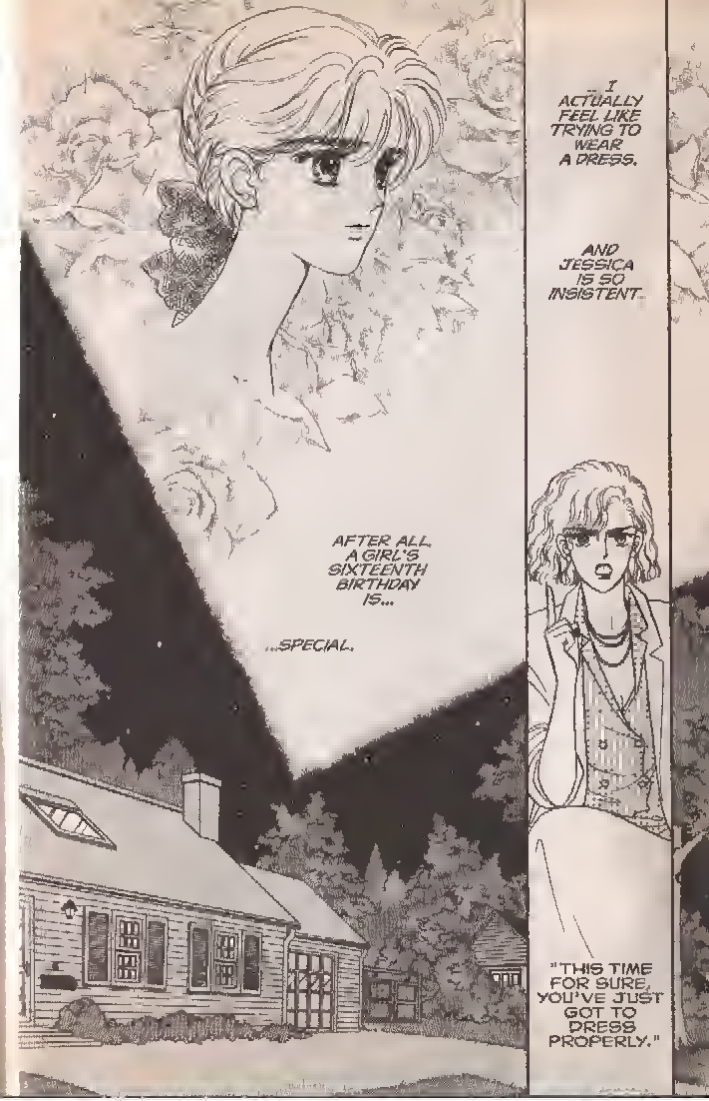
...I ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE TRYING TO WEAR A DRESS.
AND JESSICA IS SO INSISTENT...
AFTER ALL, A GIRL'S SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY IS...
...SPECIAL.
"THIS TIME FOR SURE, YOU'VE JUST GOT TO DRESS PROPERLY."

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DING DONG
IF YOU NEED A MIRROR JUST LOOK AT ME.
DO I LOOK OKAY?
IT'S FINE.
HOW'S YOUR FOOT?
BUT PLEASE, JUST CALL ME JESSICA.
SIVA AND CIPHER, ISN'T IT? NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M ANISE'S MOTHER.
WEL-COME! COME ON IN!
HOW DO YOU DO?
WHAT A BEAUTY!

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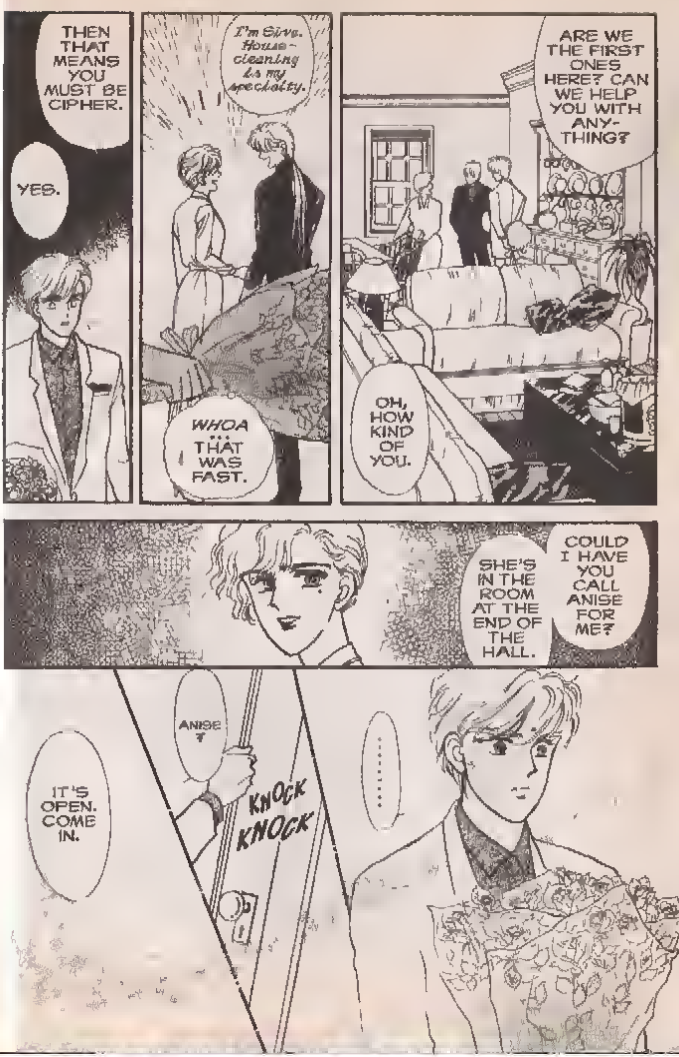
THEN THAT MEANS YOU MUST BE CIPHER.
YES.
I'm Sive. House-cleaning is my specialty.
WHOA... THAT WAS FAST.
ARE WE THE FIRST ONES HERE? CAN WE HELP YOU WITH ANY-THING?
OH, HOW KIND OF YOU.
COULD I HAVE YOU CALL ANISE FOR ME?
SHE'S IN THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE HALL.
ANISE?
KNOCK KNOCK
IT'S OPEN. COME IN.

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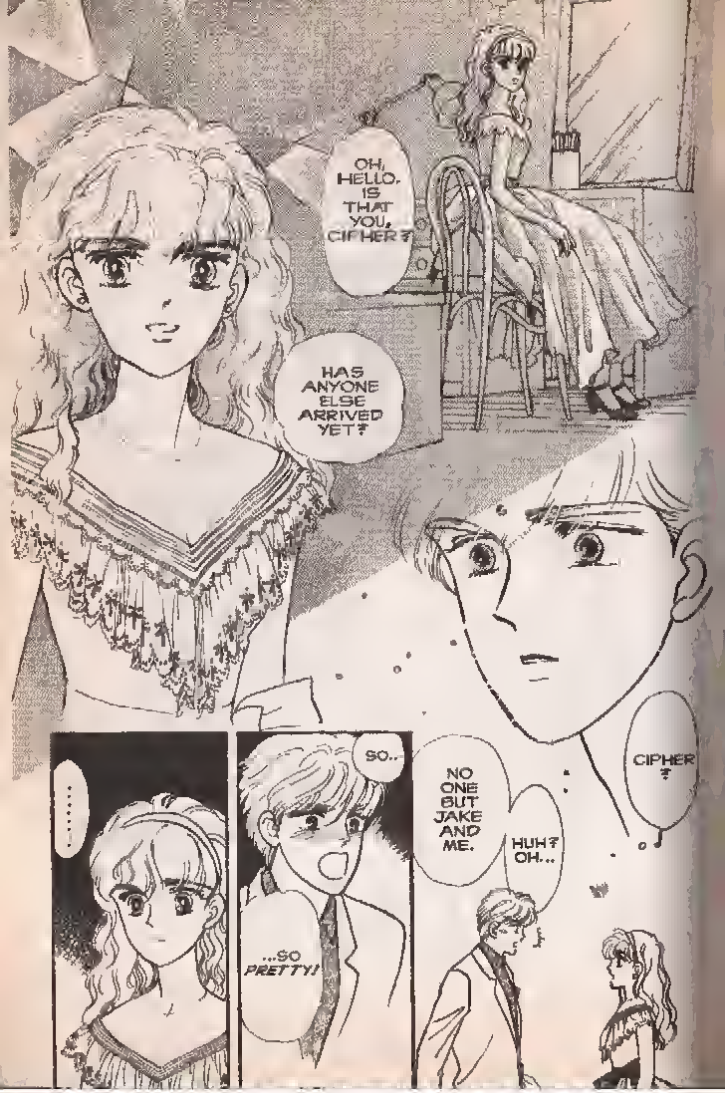

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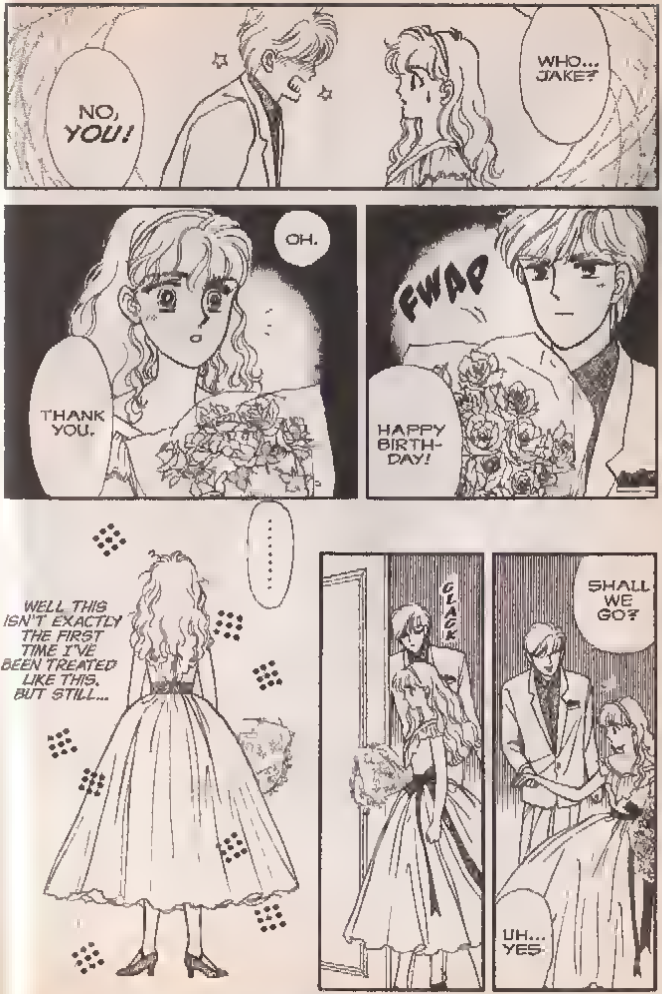

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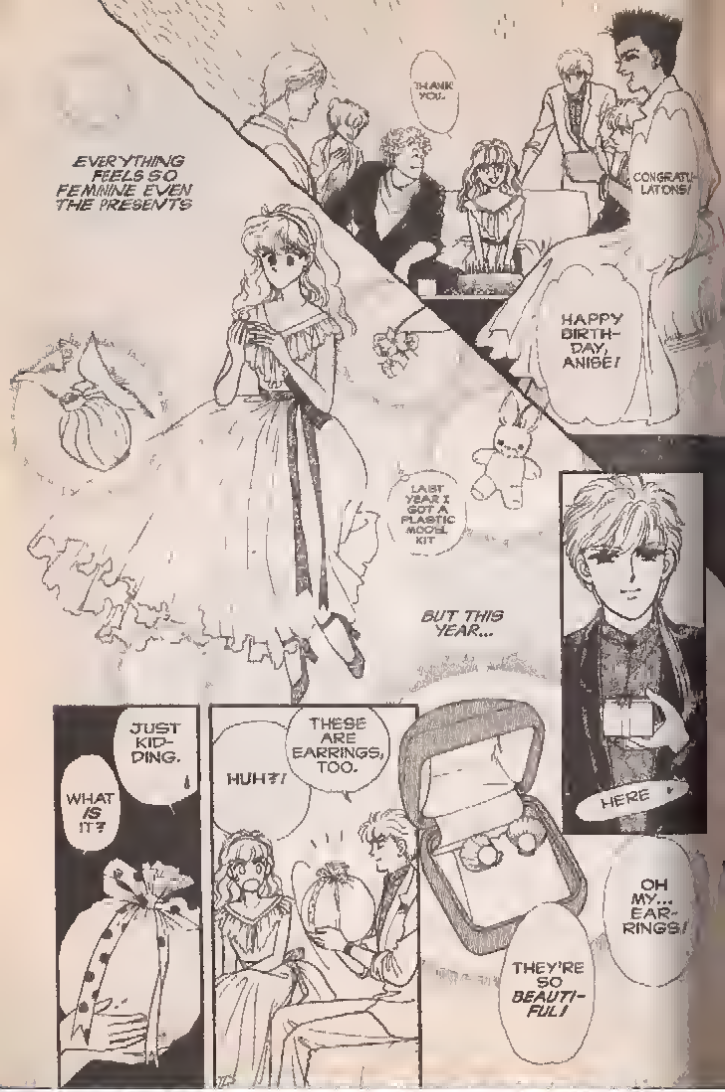

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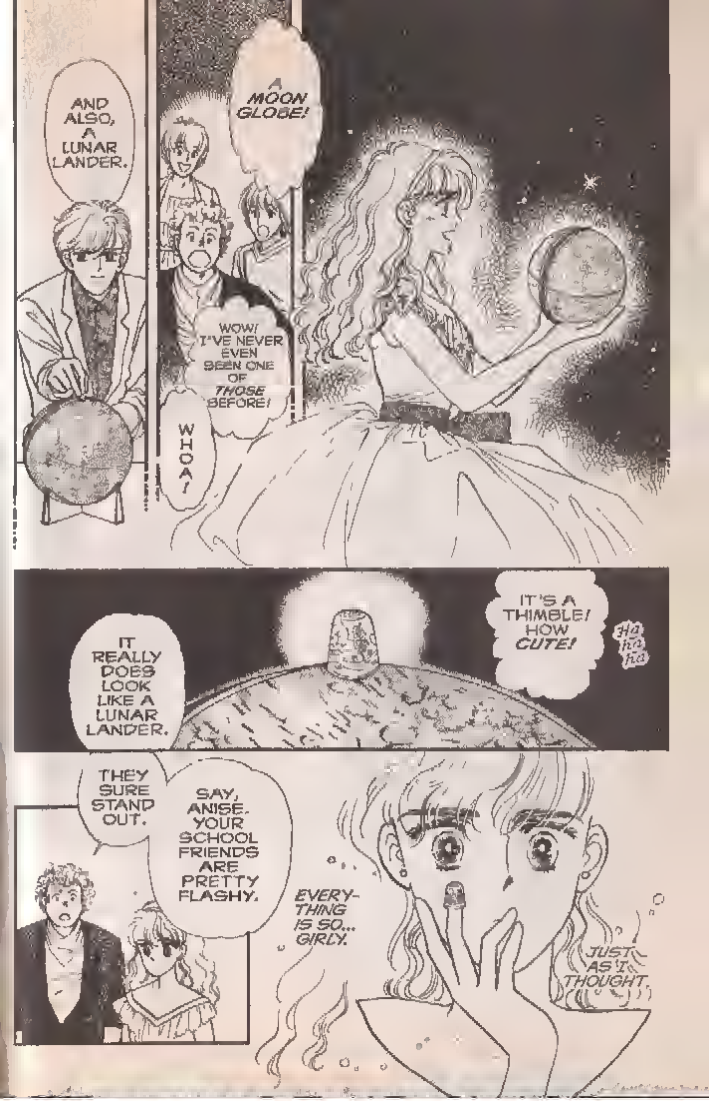
AND ALSO, A LUNAR LANDER.
A MOON GLOBE!
WOW! I'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN ONE OF THOSE BEFORE!
WHOA!
IT REALLY DOES LOOK LIKE A LUNAR LANDER.
IT'S A THIMBLE! HOW CUTE!
Ha ha ha
THEY SURE STAND OUT.
SAY, ANISE. YOUR SCHOOL FRIENDS ARE PRETTY FLASHY.
EVERY-THING IS SO... GIRLY.
JUST AS I THOUGHT.

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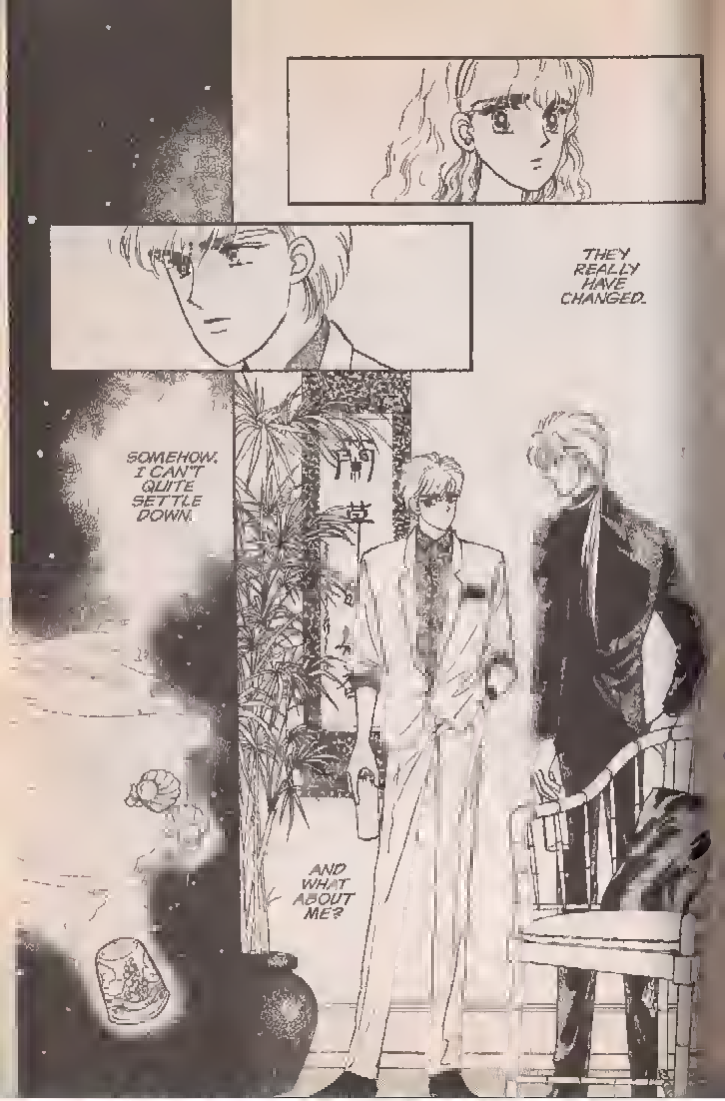

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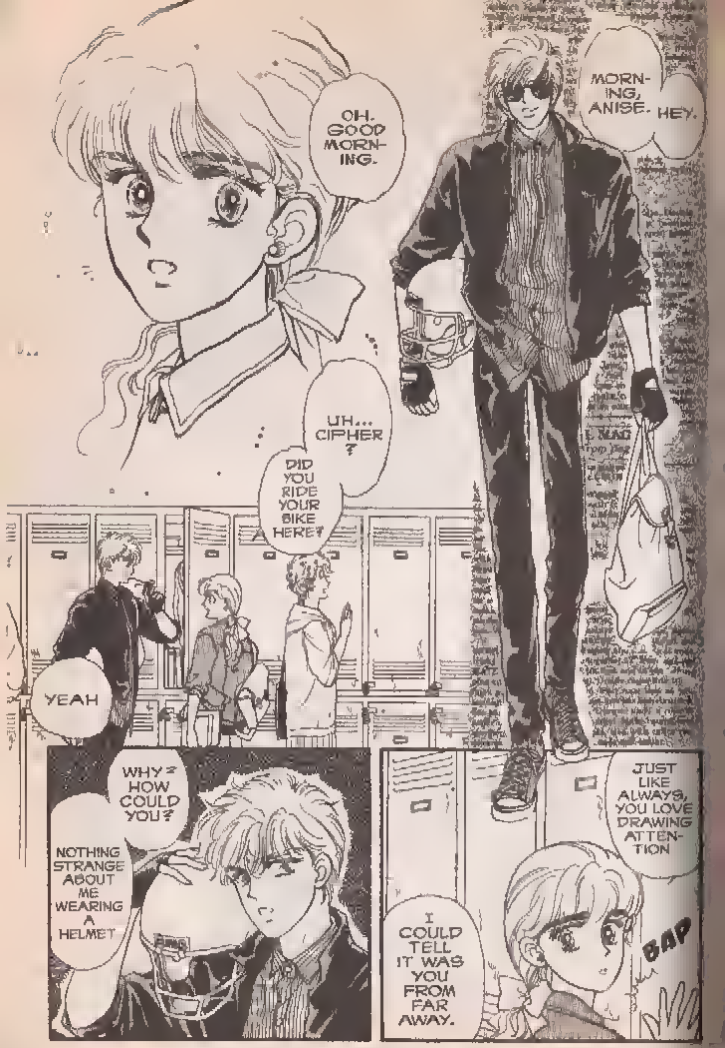
OH. GOOD MORN-ING.
MORN-ING, ANISE.
HEY.
UH... CIPHER ?
DID YOU RIDE YOUR BIKE HERE?
YEAH
WHY? HOW COULD YOU?
NOTHING STRANGE ABOUT ME WEARING A HELMET
I COULD TELL IT WAS YOU FROM FAR AWAY.
JUST LIKE ALWAYS, YOU LOVE DRAWING ATTEN-TION
SAP

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NO, THEY LOOK GOOD EVEN WITH THAT OUTFIT.
BUT THEY WERE *GREAT* WITH THAT DRESS.
IT WAS ABSOLUTELY PERFECT. YOU LOOKED BEAUTIFUL IN THAT DRESS.
REAL-LY?
OH ...
HE CAN BE SO DENSE SOME-TIMES.
WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ? ? ?
SAY, ARE THOSE THE ONES SIVA GAVE YOU?
YES! DO THEY LOOK WEIRD ?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WHA-A-T
WHERE DID YOU GET THE IDEA FOR A MOON GLOBE?
COME TO THINK OF IT, THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU IN A DRESS
WHY DON'T YOU WEAR ONE MORE OFTEN? THEY LOOK GOOD ON YOU.

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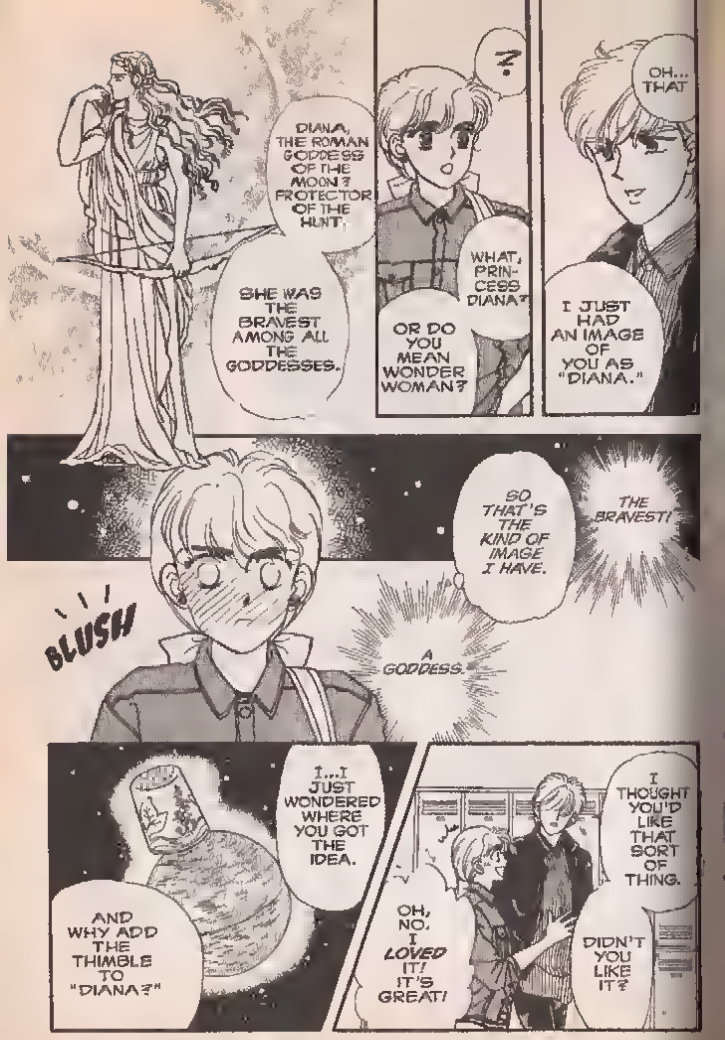
DIANA, THE ROMAN GODDESS OF THE MOON? PROTECTOR OF THE HUNT.
SHE WAS THE BRAVEST AMONG ALL THE GODDESSES.
?
WHAT, PRINCESS DIANA?
OR DO YOU MEAN WONDER WOMAN?
OH... THAT
I JUST HAD AN IMAGE OF YOU AS "DIANA."
SO THAT'S THE KIND OF IMAGE I HAVE.
THE BRAVEST!
A GODDESS.
BLUSH
I...I JUST WONDERED WHERE YOU GOT THE IDEA.
AND WHY ADD THE THIMBLE TO "DIANA?"
I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE THAT SORT OF THING.
OH, NO. I LOVED IT! IT'S GREAT!
DIDN'T YOU LIKE IT?

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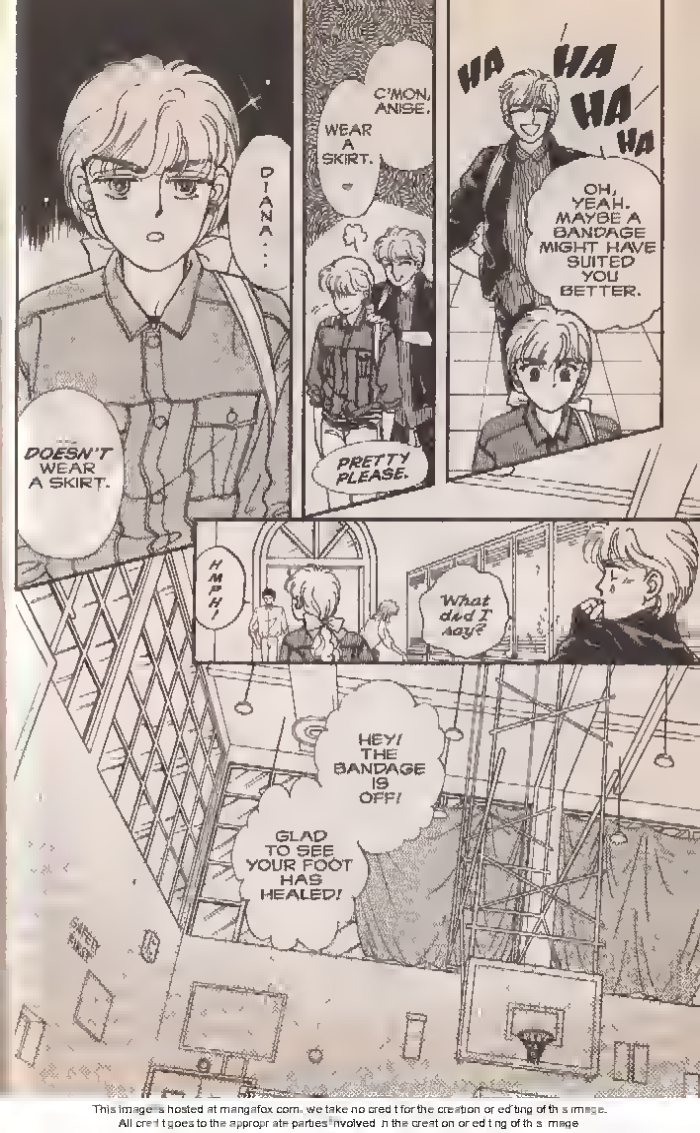
DIANA...
DOESN'T WEAR A SKIRT.
C'MON, ANISE. WEAR A SKIRT.
PRETTY PLEASE.
HA HA HA HA
OH, YEAH. MAYBE A BANDAGE MIGHT HAVE SUITED YOU BETTER.
HMPH!
What did I say?
HEY! THE BANDAGE IS OFF!
GLAD TO SEE YOUR FOOT HAS HEALED!

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WHILE I WAS OUT WITH THE SPRAIN, I LEARNED HOW TO DO THIS.
COOL!
NELSON
THE CENTER OF ATTENTION, JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
THUP
NELSON
YEAH, ABOUT THIS MUCH.
PLAP
YOUR HANDS ARE TOO SMALL.
IF YOU'RE TRYING TO PALM THE BALL, FORGET IT.
WHAT, YOU THINK YOUR HANDS ARE SO MUCH BIGGER THAN MINE?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
GRRR
NELSON

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DUNK
NELSON
ANYWAY, HOW IS PALMING THE BALL GONNA HELP ANY?
THAT WAY YOU CAN DUNK ONE-HAND-ED.
YOU THINK YOU CAN DO THAT? LET'S SEE IT!
ELSON
WAAH
THAT WAS GREAT!
COOL!
HE LOOKS JUST LIKE A PRO!
AH, THAT MAKES SENSE.
SIVA DID THE HIGH JUMP BEFORE HE RAN TRACK.
BOYS...

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IT'S LIKE THEY'RE WALKING ON THE MOON
WHY ARE THEIR FEET SO LIGHT ON THE GROUND?
THEY STOP FOR A MOMENT IN THE AIR.
AND YET THEY'RE SO FAST!
DO YOU WANT TO KEEP PLAYING?
THE WINNER GETS TO STAY IN.
YEAH
LET'S DO IT!

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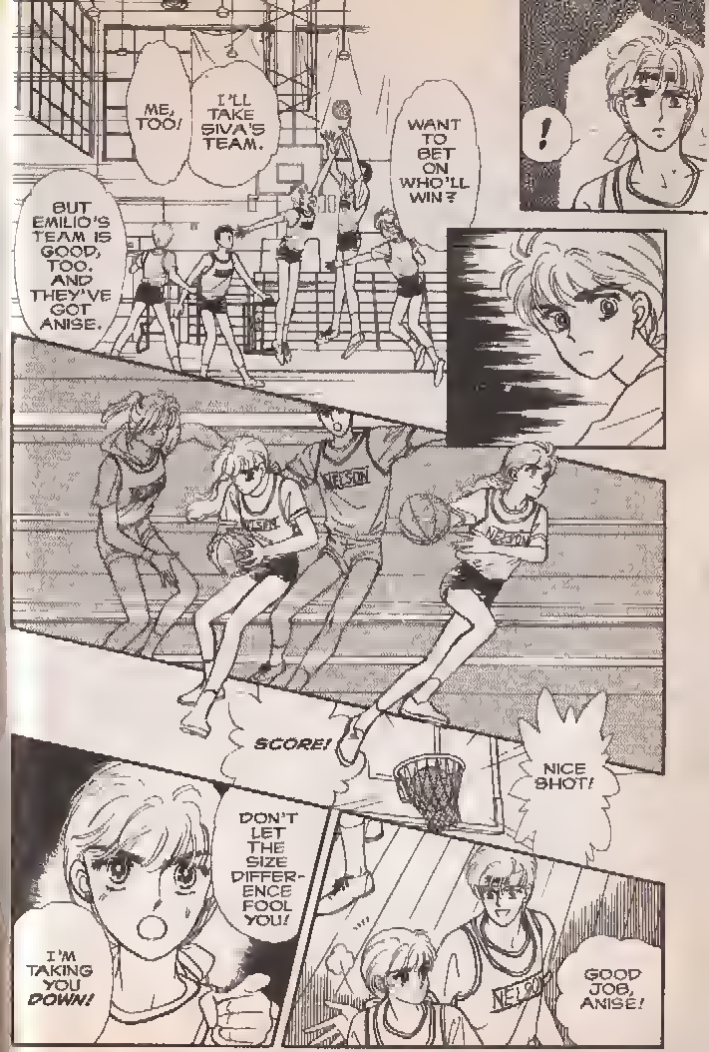

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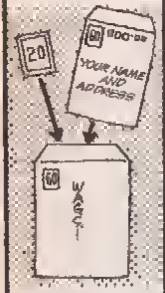
SINCE WE'VE BEEN PILING UP A BATCH OF DRAWINGS AND DOODLES, MY SOCIAL CIRCLE (MY ASSISTANTS, FRIENDS AND OTHERS) HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE FUN OF IT. SO I'LL BE ANNUAL-BASED SERIES ABOUT THE THOMPSON TWINS. EVERYONE WILL BE DRAWING CHARACTERS THEY LIKE SO THERE WILL BE A LOT OF VARIATIONS. THE TITLE IS WAGS! ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE A COPY SHOULD SEND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE. DON'T FORGET TO WRITE YOUR RETURN ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF THE ENVELOPE (INCLUDING THE ZIP CODE). WE'LL SEND YOU MORE DETAILS LATER. SO PLEASE BE PATIENT.



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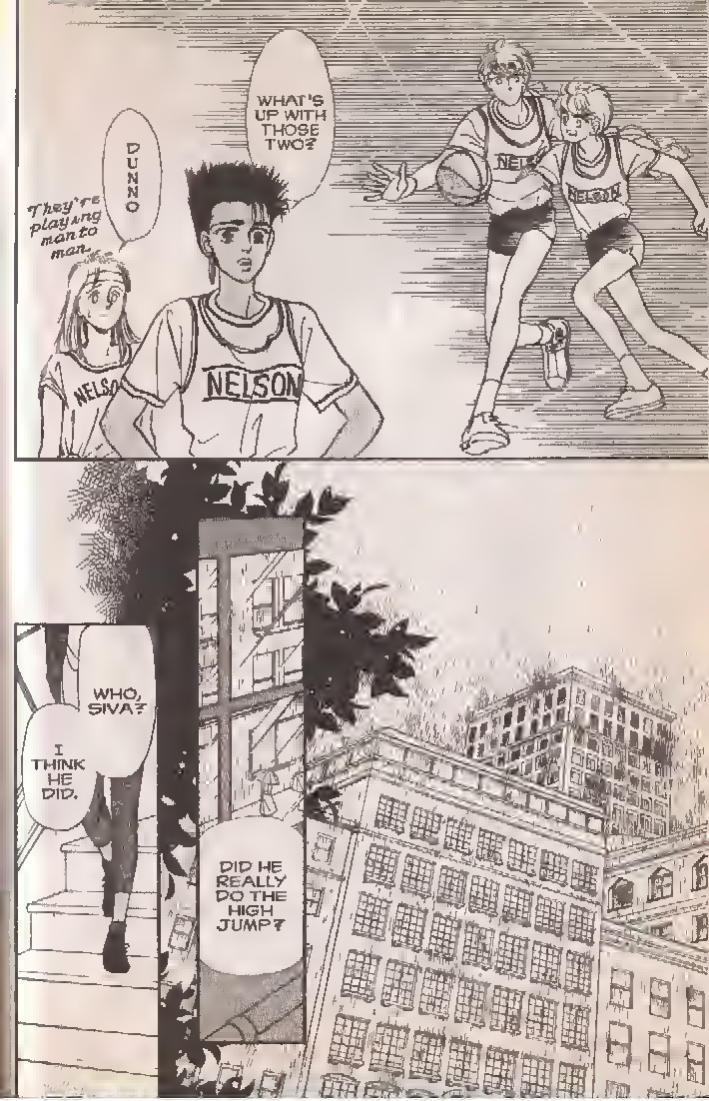

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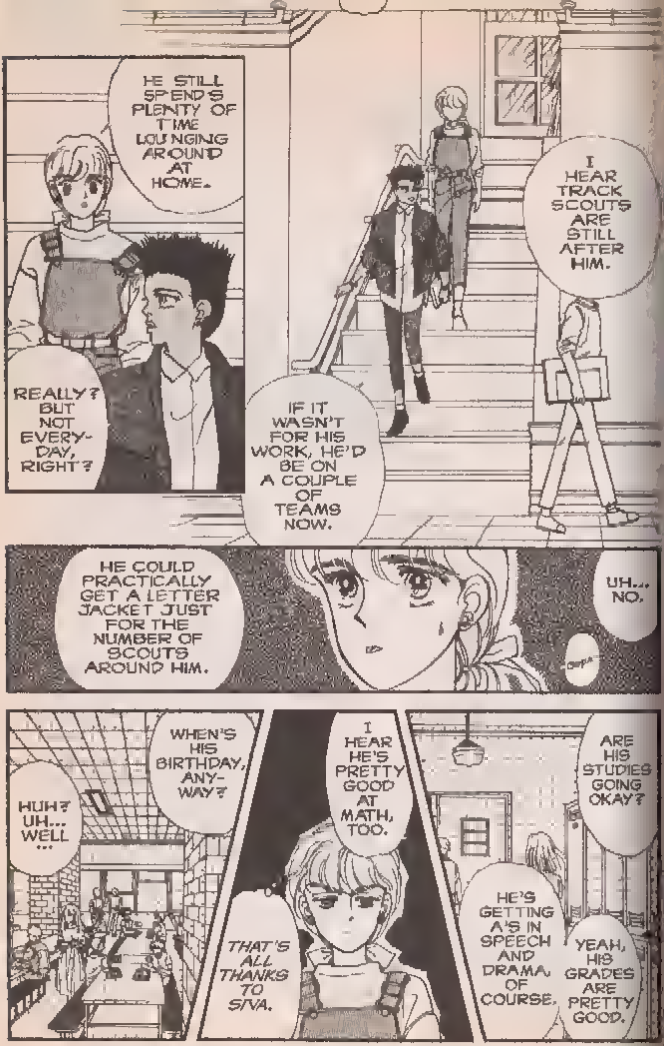
HE STILL SPENDS PLENTY OF TIME LOUNGING AROUND AT HOME.
REALLY? BUT NOT EVERY-DAY, RIGHT?
I HEAR TRACK SCOUTS ARE STILL AFTER HIM.
IF IT WASN'T FOR HIS WORK, HE'D BE ON A COUPLE OF TEAMS NOW.
HE COULD PRACTICALLY GET A LETTER JACKET JUST FOR THE NUMBER OF SCOUTS AROUND HIM.
UH... NO.
HUH? UH... WELL...
WHEN'S HIS BIRTHDAY, ANY-WAY?
I HEAR HE'S PRETTY GOOD AT MATH, TOO.
THAT'S ALL THANKS TO SIVA.
ARE HIS STUDIES GOING OKAY?
HE'S GETTING A'S IN SPEECH AND DRAMA, OF COURSE.
YEAH, HIS GRADES ARE PRETTY GOOD.

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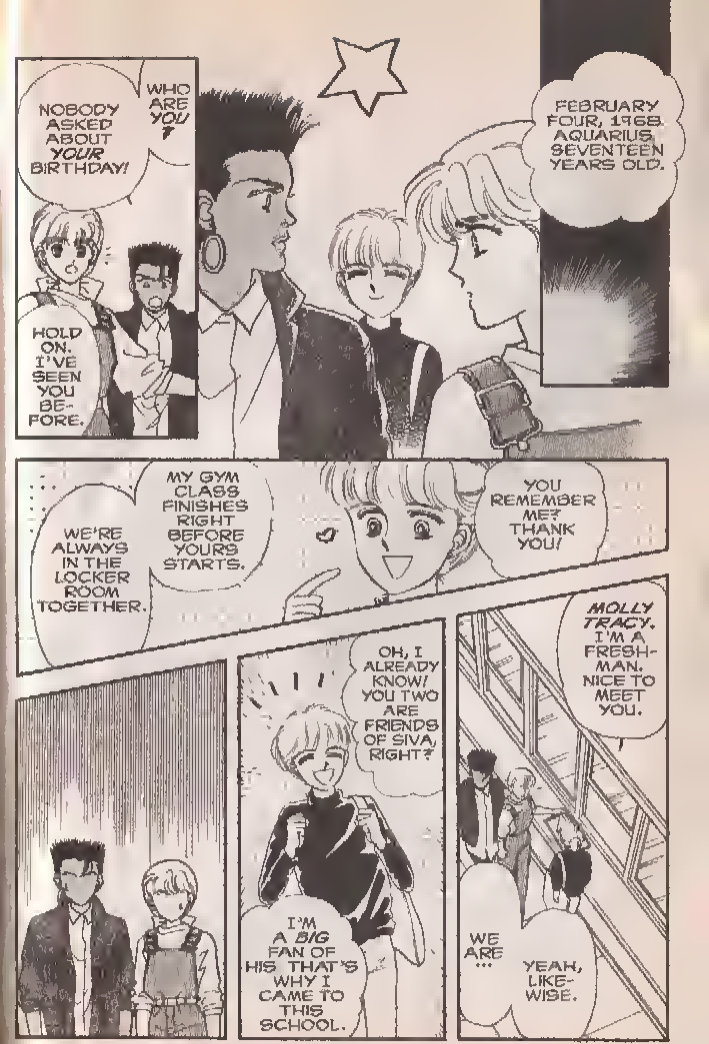
NOBODY ASKED ABOUT YOUR BIRTHDAY!
WHO ARE YOU?
HOLD ON. I'VE SEEN YOU BE-FORE.
FEBRUARY FOUR, 1968. AQUARIUS. SEVENTEEN YEARS OLD.
YOU REMEMBER ME? THANK YOU!
MY GYM CLASS FINISHES RIGHT BEFORE YOURS STARTS.
WE'RE ALWAYS IN THE LOCKER ROOM TOGETHER.
OH, I ALREADY KNOW! YOU TWO ARE FRIENDS OF SIVA, RIGHT?
I'M A BIG FAN OF HIS THAT'S WHY I CAME TO THIS SCHOOL.
MOLLY TRACY. I'M A FRESH-MAN. NICE TO MEET YOU.
WE ARE ...
YEAH, LIKE-WISE.

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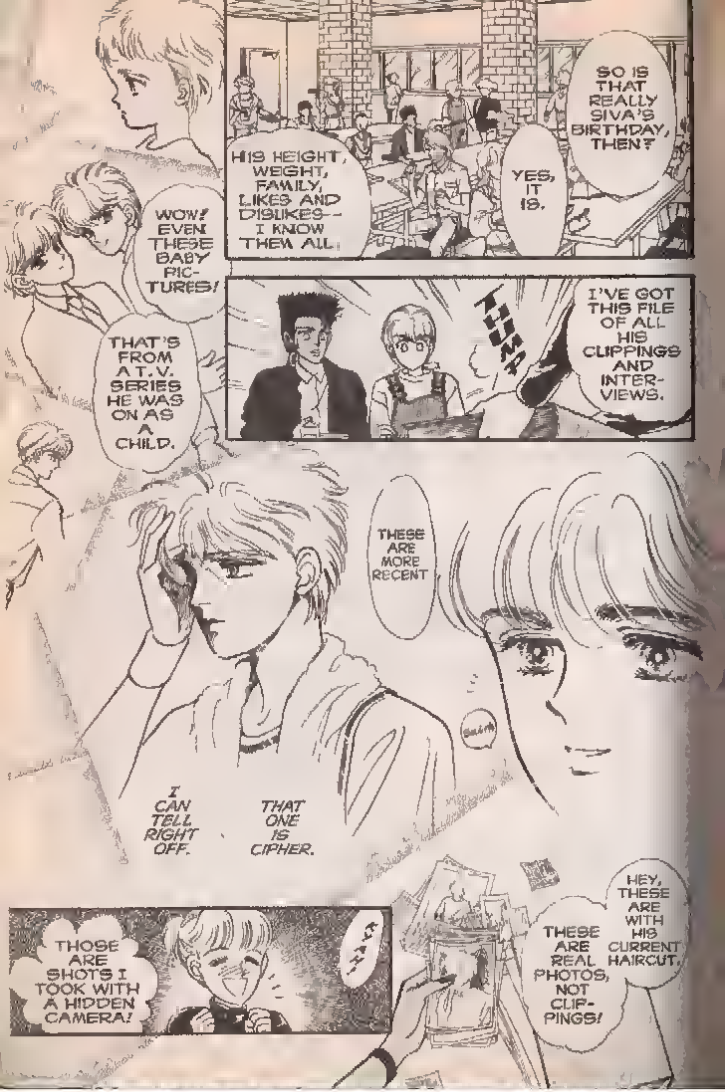
SO IS THAT REALLY SIVA'S BIRTHDAY, THEN?
YES, IT IS.
HIS HEIGHT, WEIGHT, FAMILY, LIKES AND DISLIKES-- I KNOW THEM ALL.
WOW! EVEN THESE BABY PICTURES!
I'VE GOT THIS FILE OF ALL HIS CLIPPINGS AND INTERVIEWS.
THUMP
THAT'S FROM A T.V. SERIES HE WAS ON AS A CHILD.
THESE ARE MORE RECENT
SWIPE
I CAN TELL RIGHT OFF.
THAT ONE IS CIPHER.
THOSE ARE SHOTS I TOOK WITH A HIDDEN CAMERA!
SCAN
THESE ARE REAL PHOTOS, NOT CLIPPINGS!
HEY, THESE ARE WITH HIS CURRENT HAIRCUT.

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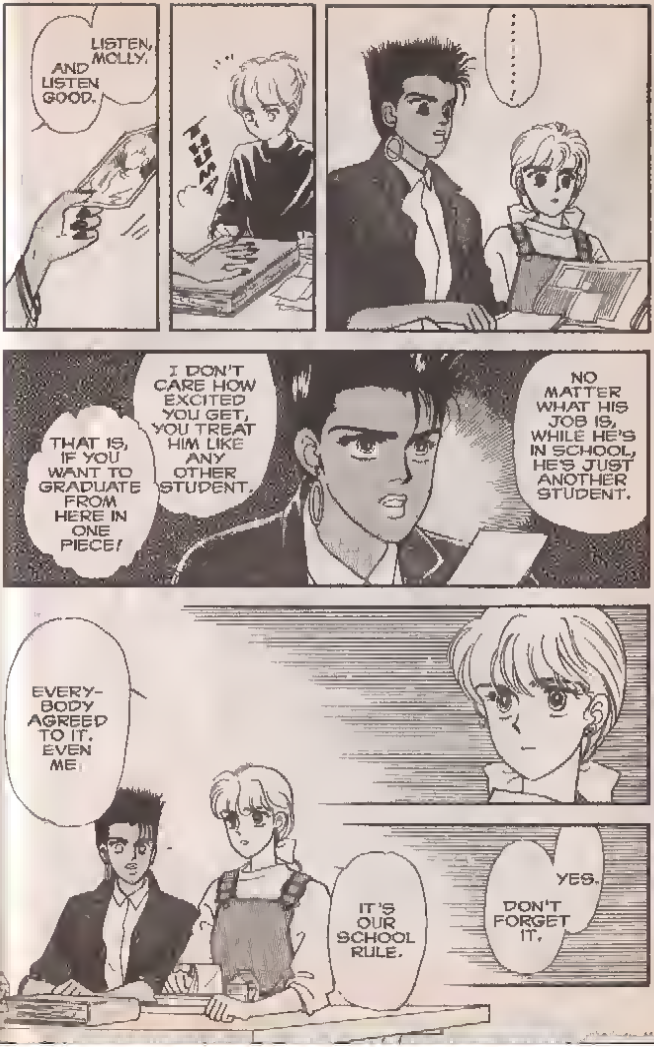
LISTEN, MOLLY. AND LISTEN GOOD.
TSUNA
.....?
THAT IS, IF YOU WANT TO GRADUATE FROM HERE IN ONE PIECE!
I DON'T CARE HOW EXCITED YOU GET, YOU TREAT HIM LIKE ANY OTHER STUDENT.
NO MATTER WHAT HIS JOB IS, WHILE HE'S IN SCHOOL, HE'S JUST ANOTHER STUDENT.
EVERY-BODY AGREED TO IT. EVEN ME!
IT'S OUR SCHOOL RULE.
YES. DON'T FORGET IT.

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HUH? WAIT A MINUTE.
I THOUGHT YOU DECIDED RIGHT FROM THE START TO BE HIS "FRIEND."
WELL, YEAH, I DID, BUT
WELL...
COME ON, GIRL... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
YEAH, TELL ME, TOO.
WHAT'S THE BUZZ?
SAY, SIVA! I FORGOT TO TELL YOU.
I FOUND A GARAGE THAT CIPHER CAN USE. LET HIM KNOW FOR ME.
BE QUIET, KID!
GYAAAH!
WH--WHAT WAS THAT?
OH, IT'S NOTHING.

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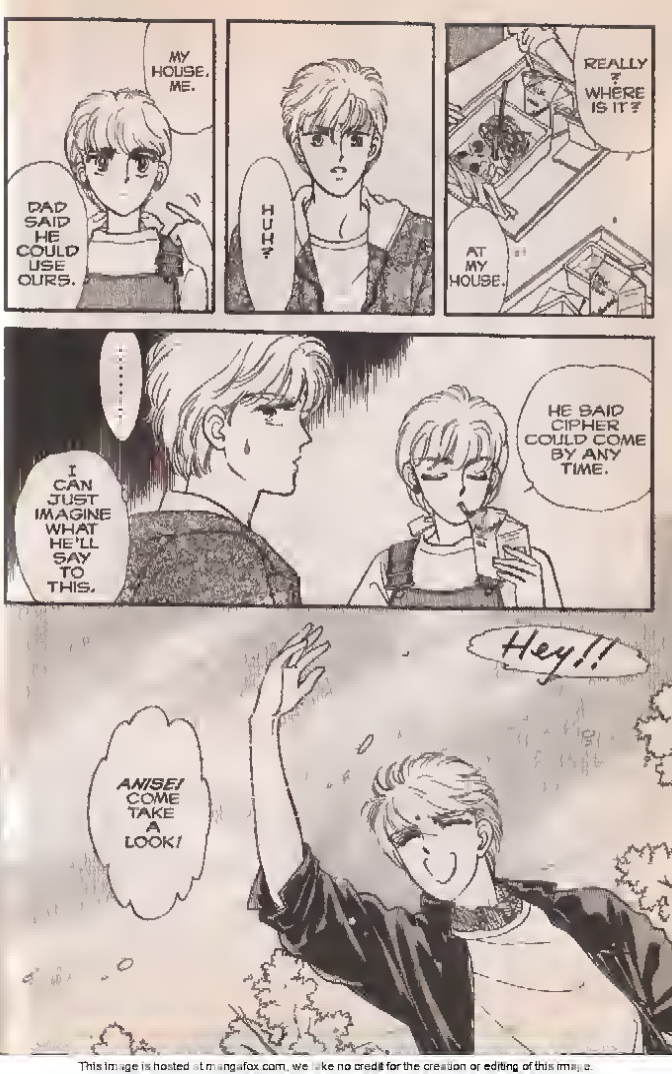
MY HOUSE, ME.
DAD SAID HE COULD USE OURS.
HUH?
REALLY? WHERE IS IT?
AT MY HOUSE.
.....
I CAN JUST IMAGINE WHAT HE'LL SAY TO THIS.
HE SAID CIPHER COULD COME BY ANY TIME.
Hey!!
ANISE! COME TAKE A LOOK!

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RATTLE
CAN YOU HELP ME PUSH IT INSIDE?
OKAY.
GULP
OF COURSE! THERE ARE ONLY A FEW THINGS WRONG WITH THE ENGINE.
THE PAINT IS RUSTED, BUT THERE'S NO REAL DAMAGE TO THE BODY.
UH
CAN YOU REALLY FIX THIS THING?
IN A MONTH OR TWO, I CAN MAKE IT GOOD AS NEW!
I'LL BE COMING OVER AS MUCH AS I CAN.
OH ...

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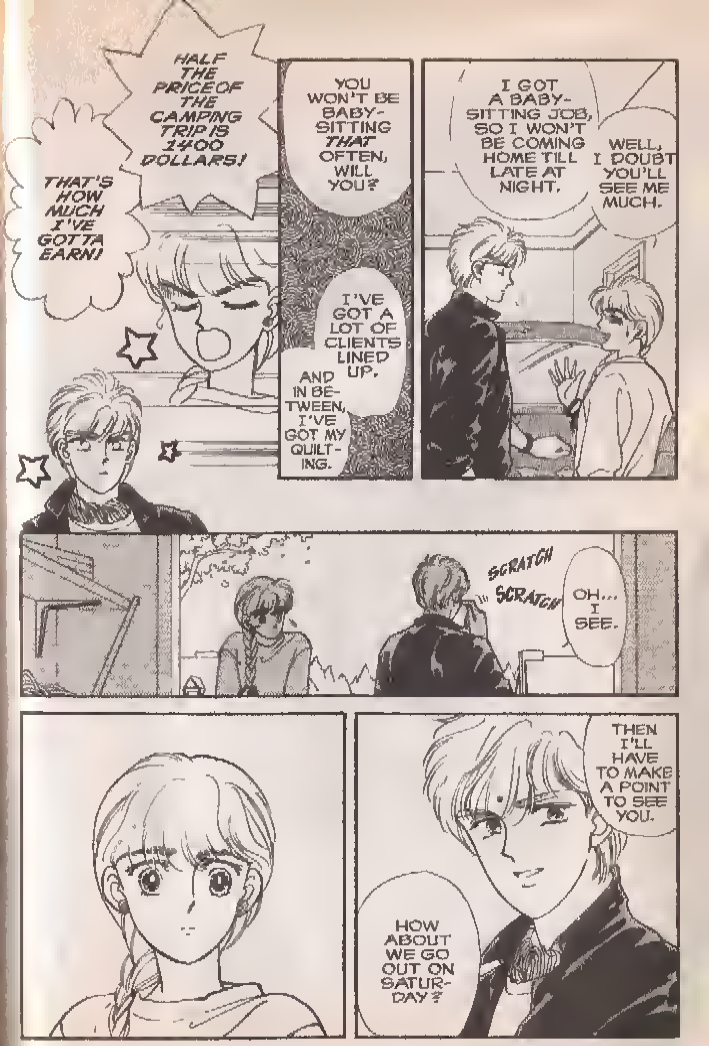
HALF THE PRICE OF THE CAMPING TRIP IS 1400 DOLLARS!
THAT'S HOW MUCH I'VE GOTTA EARN!
YOU WON'T BE BABY-SITTING THAT OFTEN, WILL YOU?
I'VE GOT A LOT OF CLIENTS LINED UP.
AND IN BE-TWEEN, I'VE GOT MY QUILT-ING.
I GOT A BABY-SITTING JOB, SO I WON'T BE COMING HOME TILL LATE AT NIGHT.
WELL, I DOUBT YOU'LL SEE ME MUCH.
SCRATCH SCRATCH
OH... I SEE.
HOW ABOUT WE GO OUT ON SATUR-DAY?
THEN I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A POINT TO SEE YOU.

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IS THAT A '57 CHEVY?
JOLT
GOOD AFTER-NOON! NICE TO SEE YOU!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR LENDING ME YOUR GARAGE.
OH, IT'S NO PROBLEM AT ALL.
I'LL GO FIX SOME COF-FEE.
SLAM
SO, ROY, DO YOU LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY?
I'VE ONLY HEARD THAT "SIVA" LIVES ALONE IN AN APART-MENT.
I GO OVER THERE TO HANG OUT A LOT.
HE'S THE ONE WHO GOES TO SCHOOL AND WORKS.
I SEE.
SO, IS THAT WHERE YOU MET ANISE?
YES, THROUGH MY BROTHER.

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WHAT'S HE DRIVING AT?
OH, NO, NOT SO MUCH.
WHAT...
IT SEEMS THAT ANISE SPENDS A LOT OF TIME THERE HERSELF.
SO HOW'D IT GO?
DID HE GIVE YOU THE ONCE OVER?
I SUSPECTED THAT WAS HIS PLAN ALL ALONG.
YEAH, HOW'D YOU KNOW?
HE WANTED TO GET A CLOSER LOOK AT YOU.
PROBABLY HASN'T MET ANY OF ANISE'S MALE FRIENDS EXCEPT CHILDHOOD PLAYMATES.
BUT SHE HAS FRIENDS FROM SCHOOL, TOO!
EITHER WAY, HE'S MET THEIR PARENTS, SO THEY'RE NO PROBLEM.

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CLUNK
.....
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT HE'D WORRY.
AND THEN, SUDDENLY, YOU APPEAR ON THE SCENE. AND YOU'VE GOTTEN REALLY CLOSE.
DON'T MAKE SUCH A SAD FACE.
THIS IS A GOOD CHANCE.
IF HER FATHER LIKES YOU, THAT MAKES THINGS EASY.
YOU CAN GET ALONG WITH HIM, AND YOU CAN GET ALONG WITH ANISE.
GRIN
GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT!

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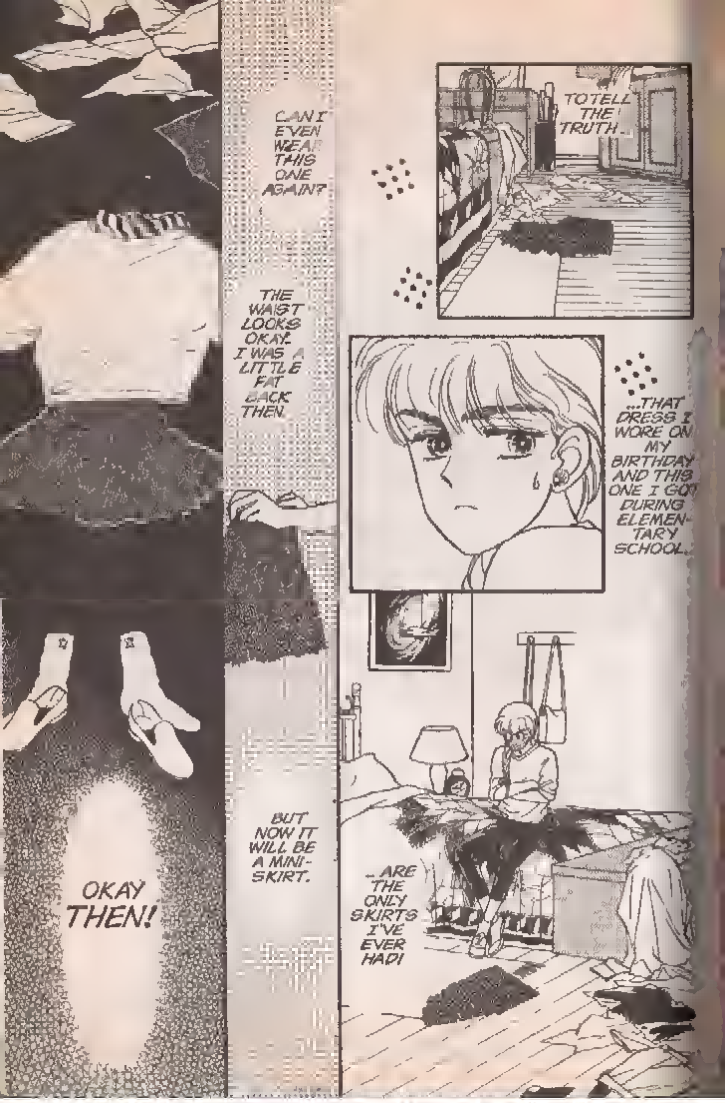
TO TELL THE TRUTH...
...THAT DRESS I WORE ON MY BIRTHDAY AND THIS ONE I GOT DURING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL...
--ARE THE ONLY SKIRTS I'VE EVER HAD!
BUT NOW IT WILL BE A MINI-SKIRT.
OKAY THEN!
CAN I EVEN WEAR THIS ONE AGAIN?
THE WAIST LOOKS OKAY. I WAS A LITTLE FAT BACK THEN.

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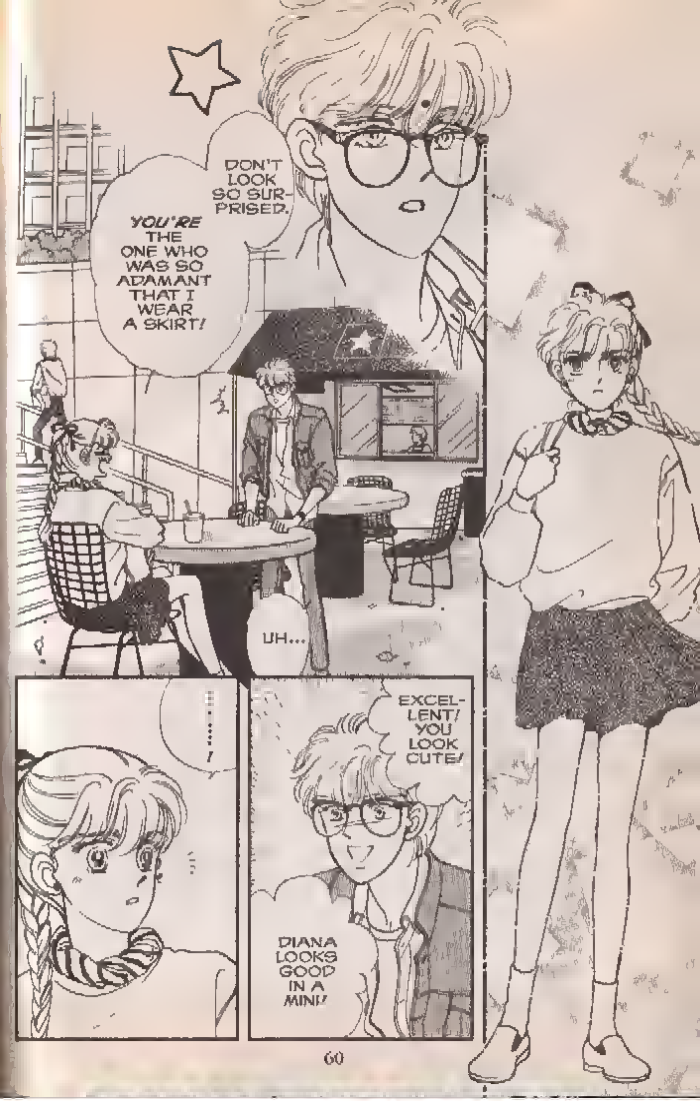
DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS SO ADAMANT THAT I WEAR A SKIRT!
UH...
EXCELLENT! YOU LOOK CUTE!
DIANA LOOKS GOOD IN A MINI!

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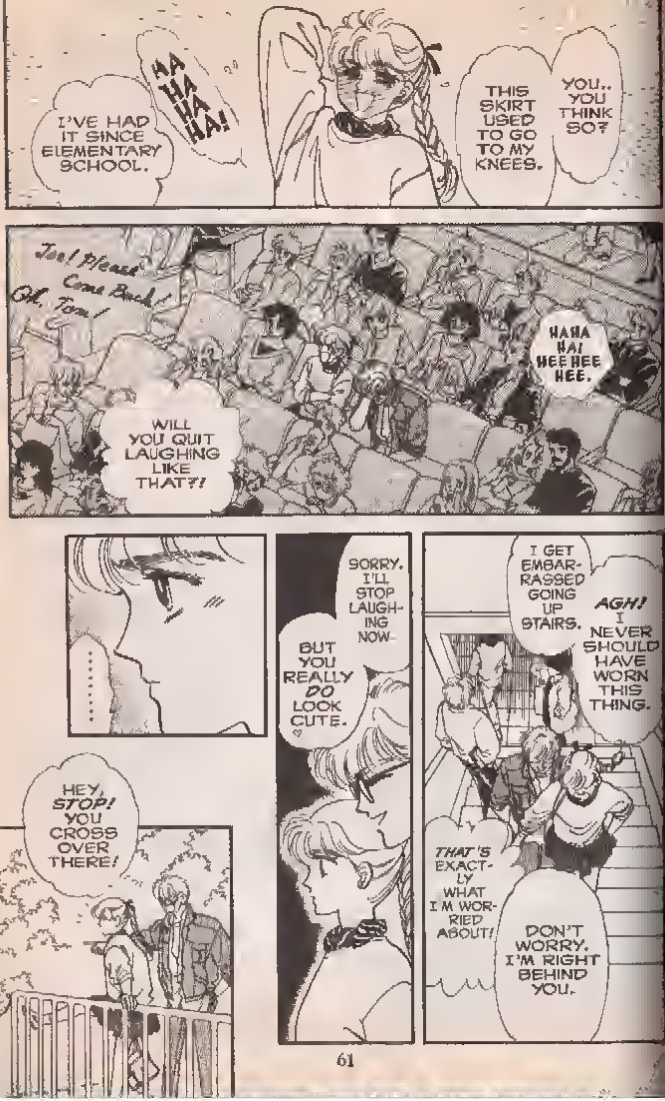
I'VE HAD IT SINCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.
HA HA HA HA!
THIS SKIRT USED TO GO TO MY KNEES.
YOU.. YOU THINK SO?
Joe! Please Come Back!
Oh, Tom!
WILL YOU QUIT LAUGHING LIKE THAT?!
HAHA HA! HEE HEE HEE.
.....
SORRY. I'LL STOP LAUGHING NOW-
BUT YOU REALLY DO LOOK CUTE.
I GET EMBARRASSED GOING UP STAIRS.
AGH! I NEVER SHOULD HAVE WORN THIS THING.
HEY, STOP! YOU CROSS OVER THERE!
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT!
DON'T WORRY, I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

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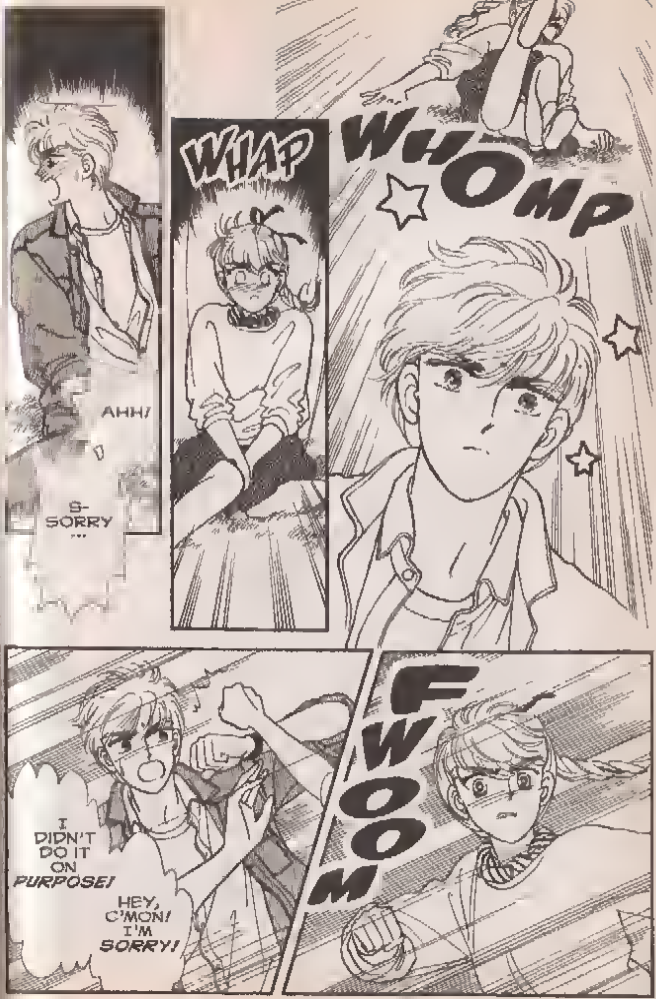

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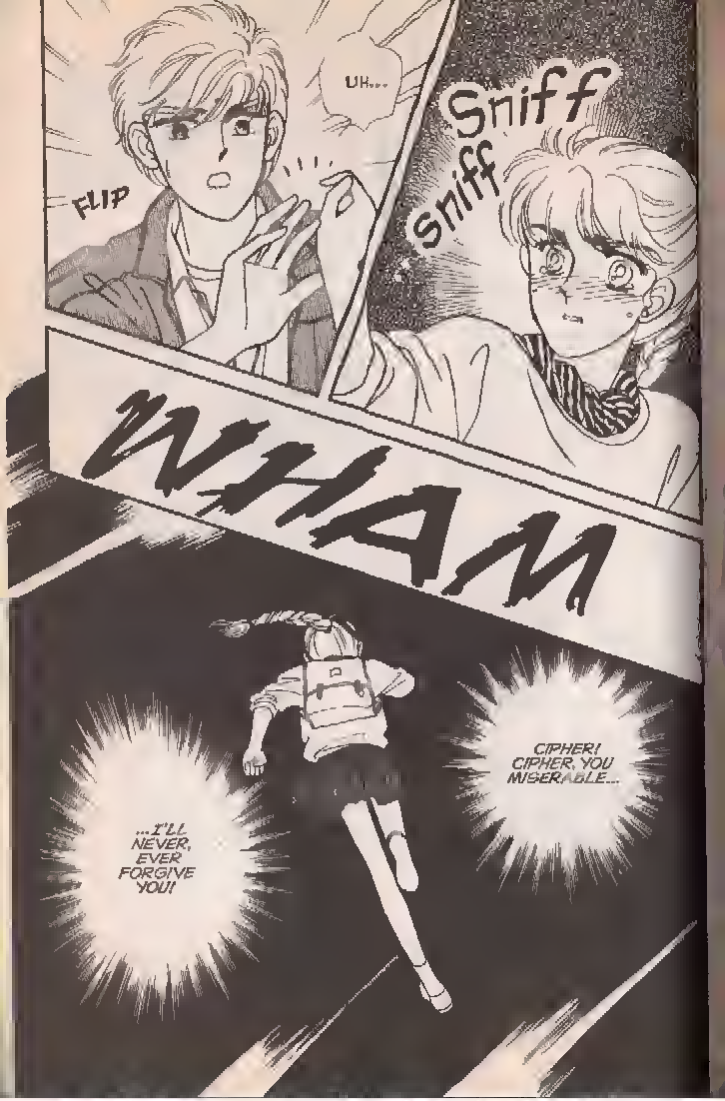

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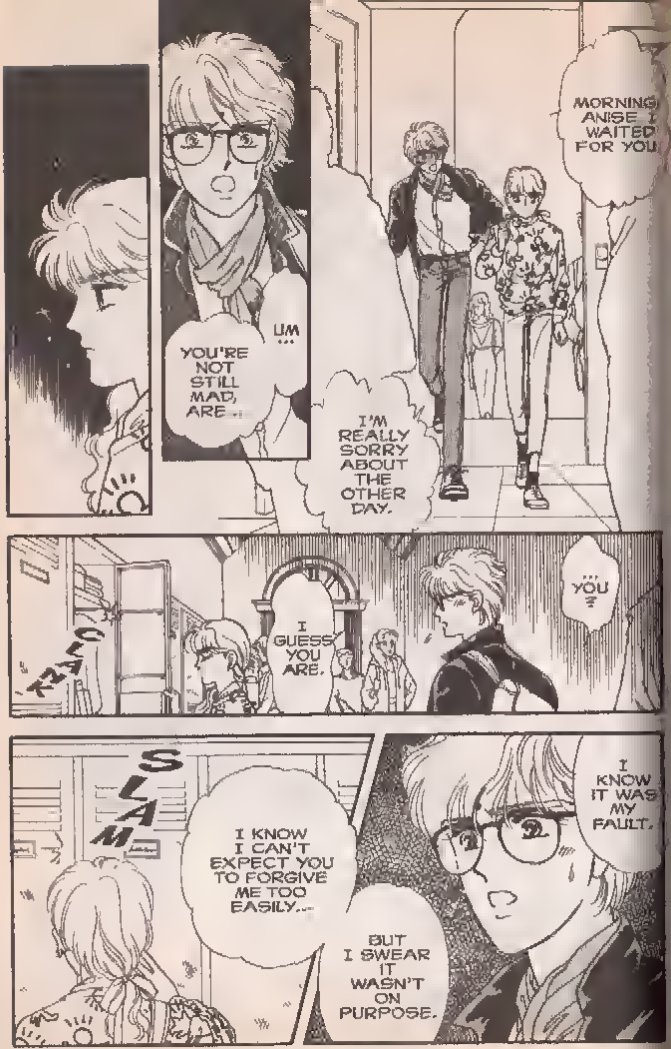
MORNING, ANISE. I WAITED FOR YOU.
I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT THE OTHER DAY.
UM...
YOU'RE NOT STILL MAD, ARE...
CLARK
I GUESS YOU ARE.
...YOU?
SLAM
I KNOW I CAN'T EXPECT YOU TO FORGIVE ME TOO EASILY...
BUT I SWEAR IT WASN'T ON PURPOSE.
I KNOW IT WAS MY FAULT.

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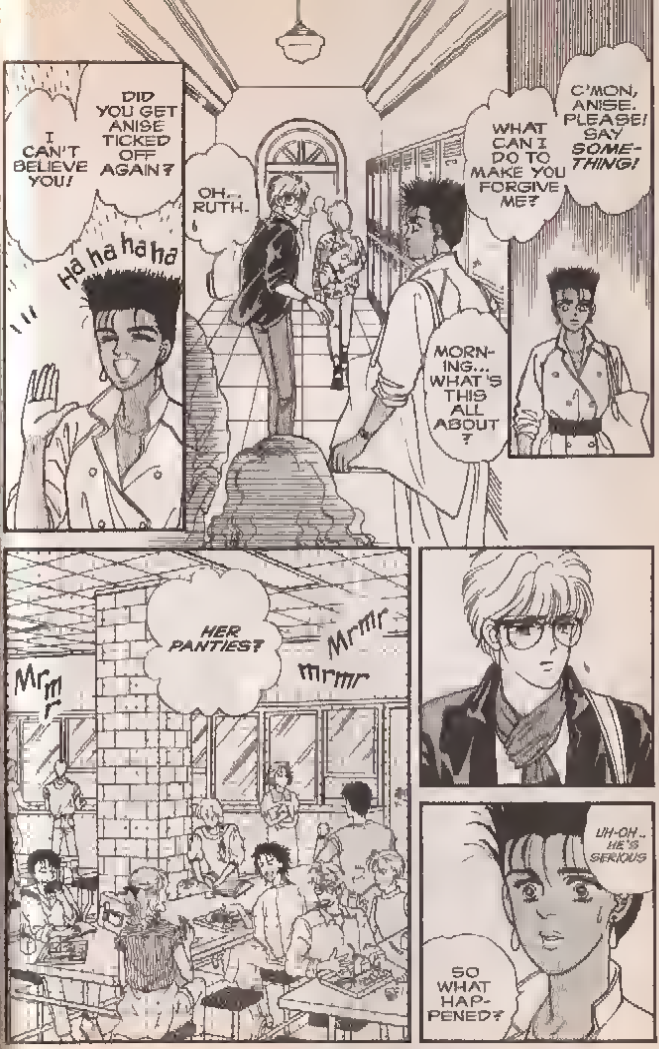

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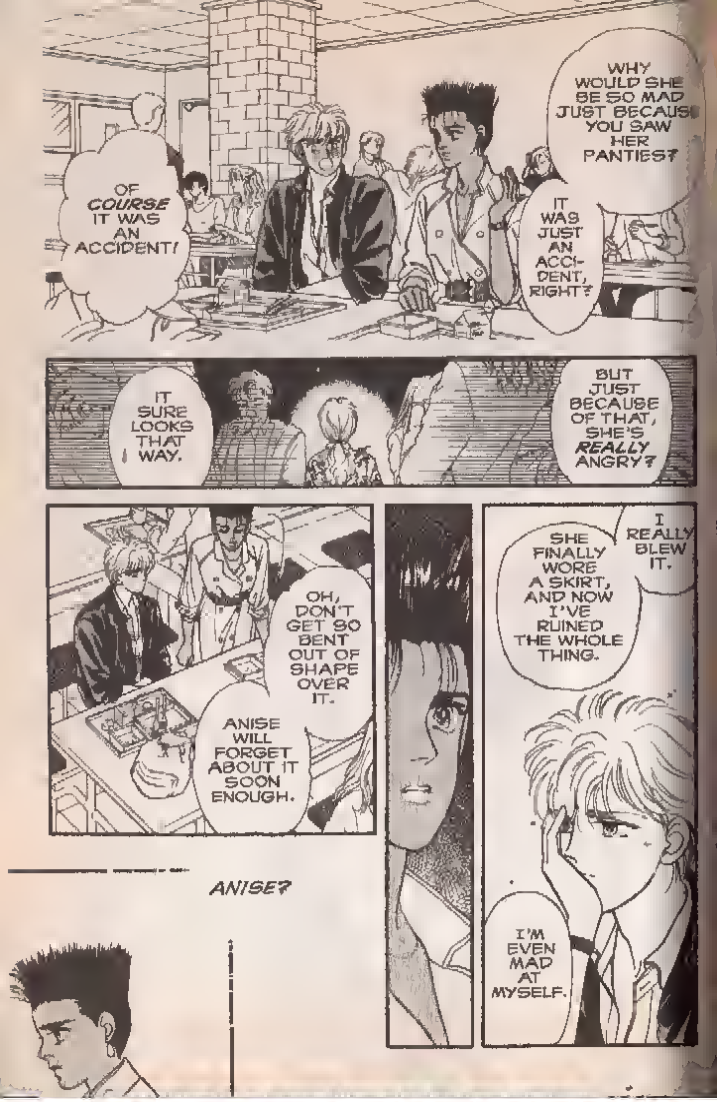
WHY WOULD SHE BE SO MAD JUST BECAUSE YOU SAW HER PANTIES?
IT WAS JUST AN ACCI-DENT, RIGHT?
OF COURSE IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!
BUT JUST BECAUSE OF THAT, SHE'S REALLY ANGRY?
IT SURE LOOKS THAT WAY.
OH, DON'T GET SO BENT OUT OF SHAPE OVER IT.
ANISE WILL FORGET ABOUT IT SOON ENOUGH.
I REALLY BLEW IT.
SHE FINALLY WORE A SKIRT, AND NOW I'VE RUINED THE WHOLE THING.
I'M EVEN MAD AT MYSELF.
ANISE?

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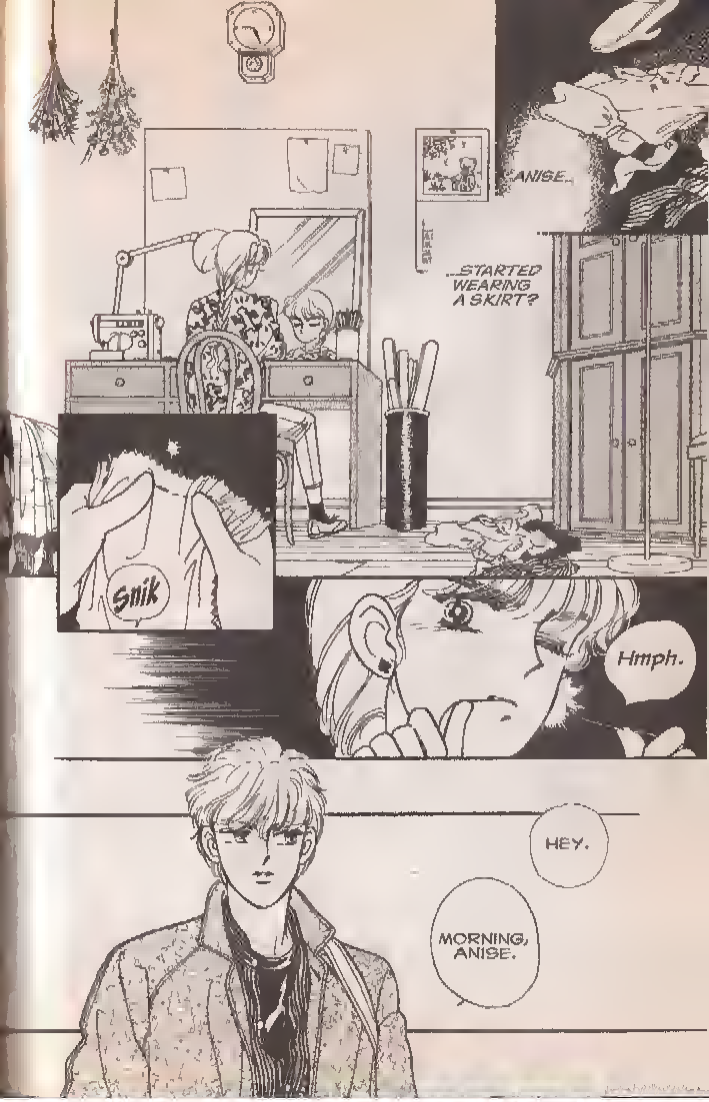

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WOULD YOU HAVE SAID HELLO IF IT WAS CIPHER?
OH... IT'S YOU, SIVA.
GOOD MORNING.
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY?
CIPHER CAN CLEAN UP HIS OWN PROBLEMS.
THE MORE HE'S IN TROUBLE, THE LESS HE ASKS FOR HELP.
HE JUST TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED.
NO, NOT AT ALL!
DID CIPHER TELL YOU TO APOLOGIZE OR SOMETHING?

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HIS EYES WERE RED THIS MORNING. I'M SURE HE DIDN'T SLEEP ALL NIGHT.
AND DESPITE HIS APPETITE, HE ONLY ATE TWO ROLLS FOR BREAKFAST.
THE POOR THING. IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S ON THE VERGE OF DEATH.
I REALLY HIT HER WEAK SPOT.
QUIT BEING SUCH A DRAMA QUEEN!
IF HE DIES, IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT.
WELL, IT'S ALL FOR ROY'S SAKE.

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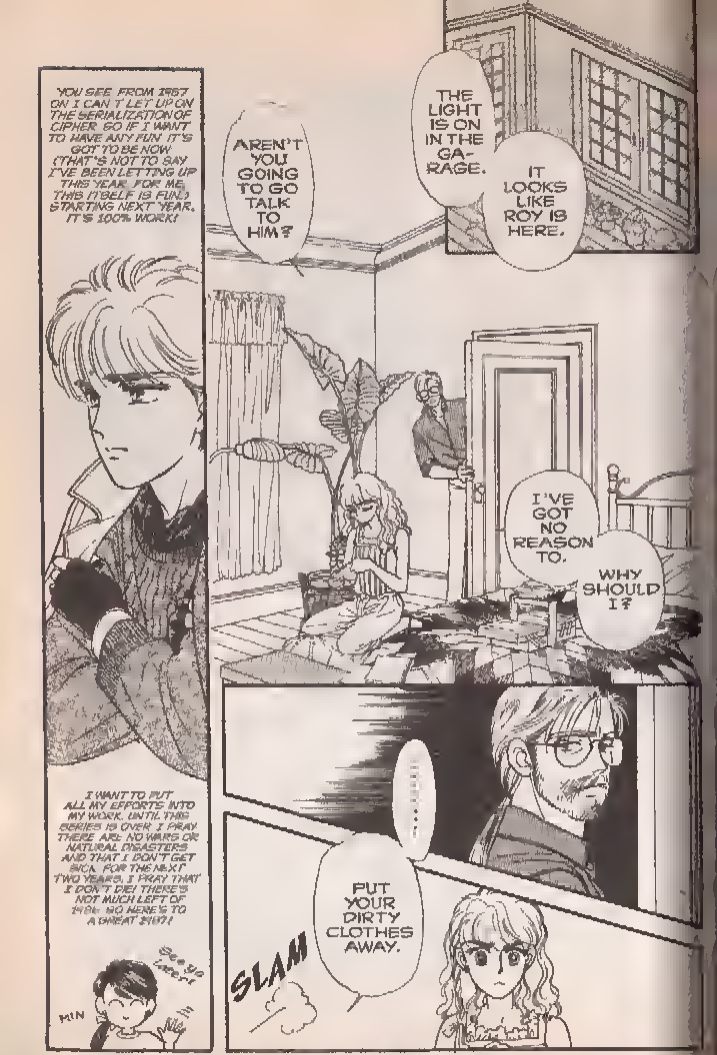
YOU SEE FROM 1987 ON I CAN'T LET UP ON THE SERIALIZATION OF CIPHER. SO IF I WANT TO HAVE ANY FUN, IT'S GOT TO BE NOW. (THAT'S NOT TO SAY I'VE BEEN LETTING UP THIS YEAR, FOR ME, THIS ITSELF IS FUN.) STARTING NEXT YEAR, IT'S 100% WORK!
I WANT TO PUT ALL MY EFFORTS INTO MY WORK. UNTIL THIS SERIES IS OVER I PRAY THERE ARE NO WARS OR NATURAL DISASTERS AND THAT I DON'T GET SICK. FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS, I PRAY THAT I DON'T DIE! THERE'S NOT MUCH LEFT OF 1986! NO HERE'S TO A GREAT 1987!
MIN
See ya later!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO GO TALK TO HIM?
THE LIGHT IS ON IN THE GA-RAGE.
IT LOOKS LIKE ROY IS HERE.
I'VE GOT NO REASON TO.
WHY SHOULD I?
PUT YOUR DIRTY CLOTHES AWAY.
SLAM

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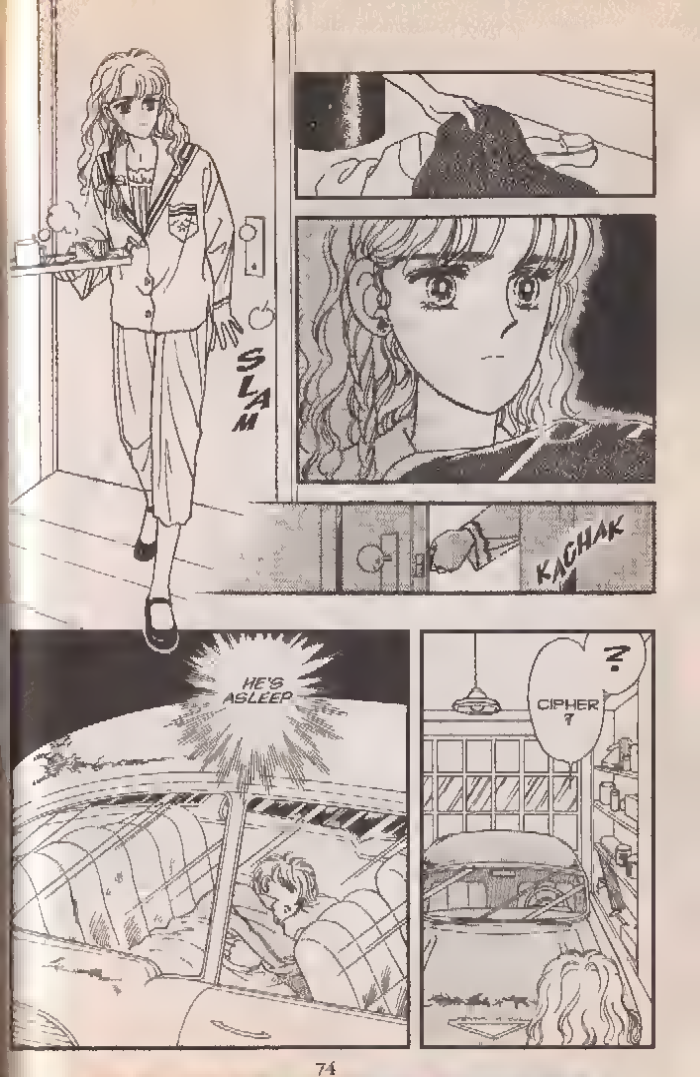

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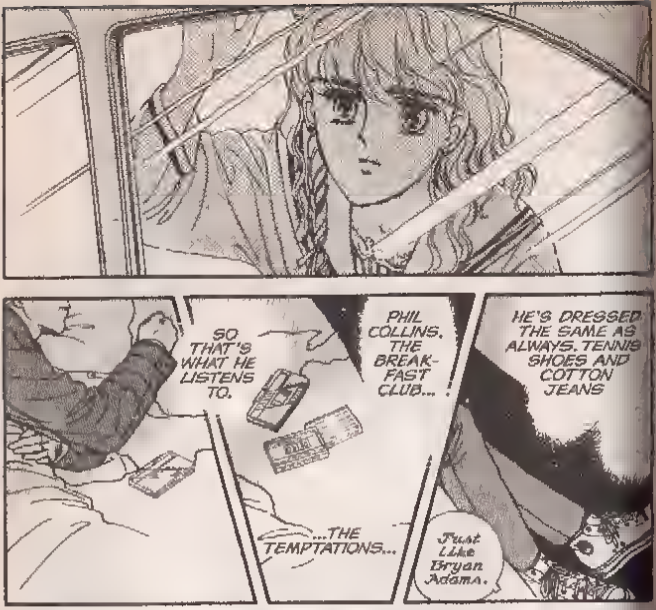
SO THAT'S WHAT HE LISTENS TO.
PHIL COLLINS, THE BREAK-FAST CLUB...!
...THE TEMPTATIONS...
HE'S DRESSED THE SAME AS ALWAYS. TENNIS SHOES AND COTTON JEANS
Just Like Bryan Adams.

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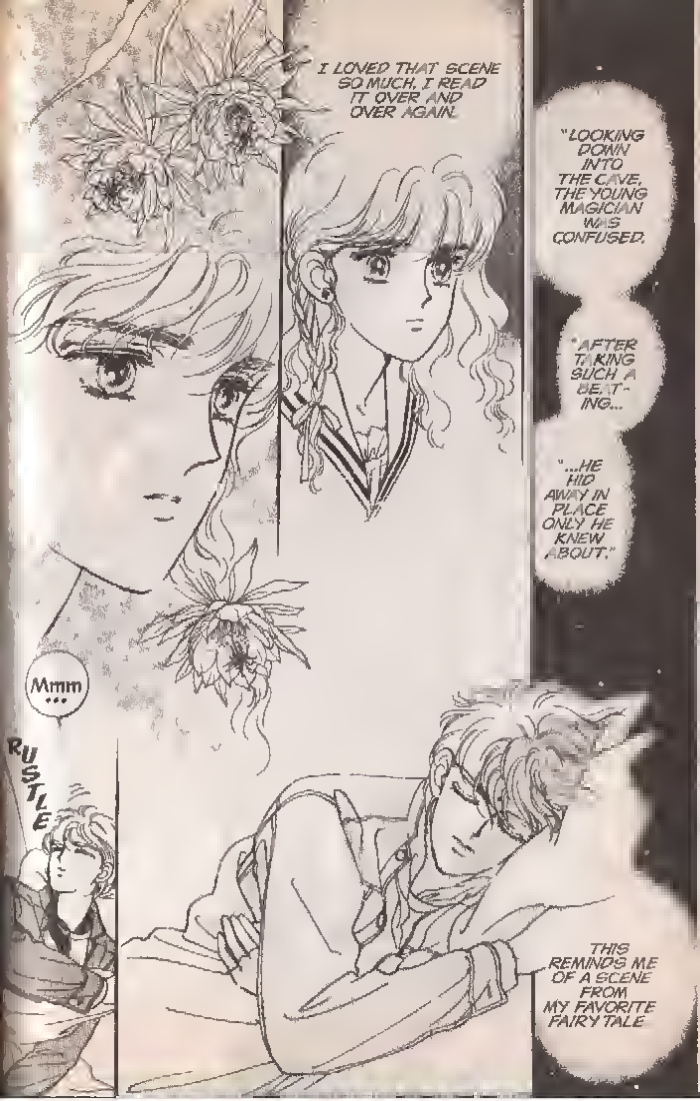
I LOVED THAT SCENE SO MUCH, I READ IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
"LOOKING DOWN INTO THE CAVE, THE YOUNG MAGICIAN WAS CONFUSED.
"AFTER TAKING SUCH A BEATING...
"...HE HID AWAY IN PLACE ONLY HE KNEW ABOUT."
Mmm...
RUSTLE
THIS REMINDS ME OF A SCENE FROM MY FAVORITE FAIRY TALE

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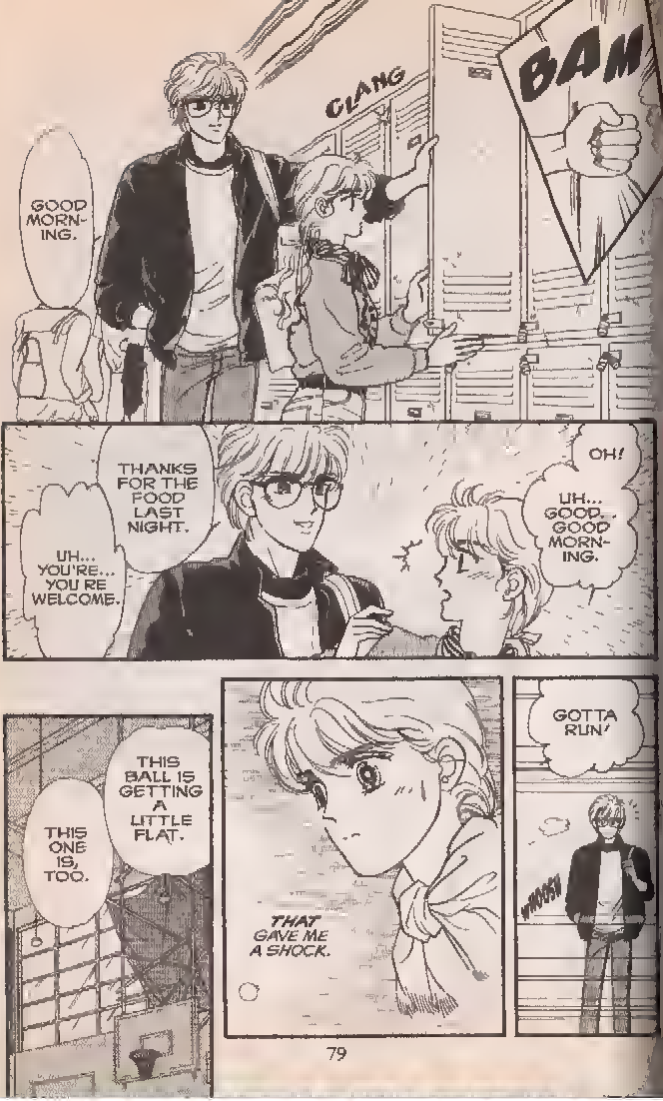

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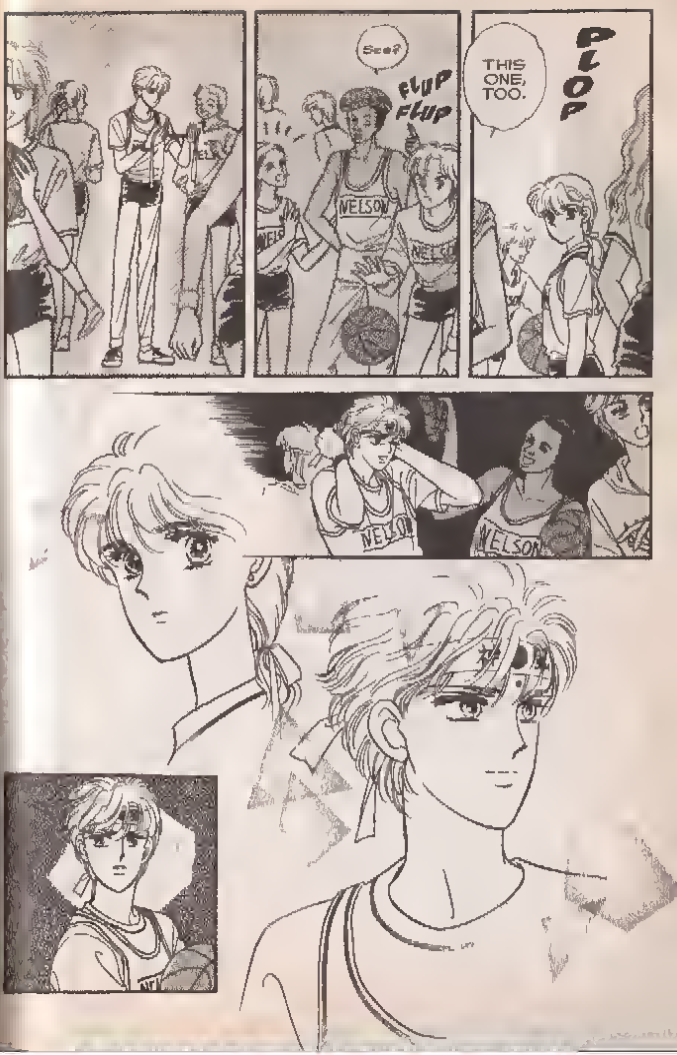

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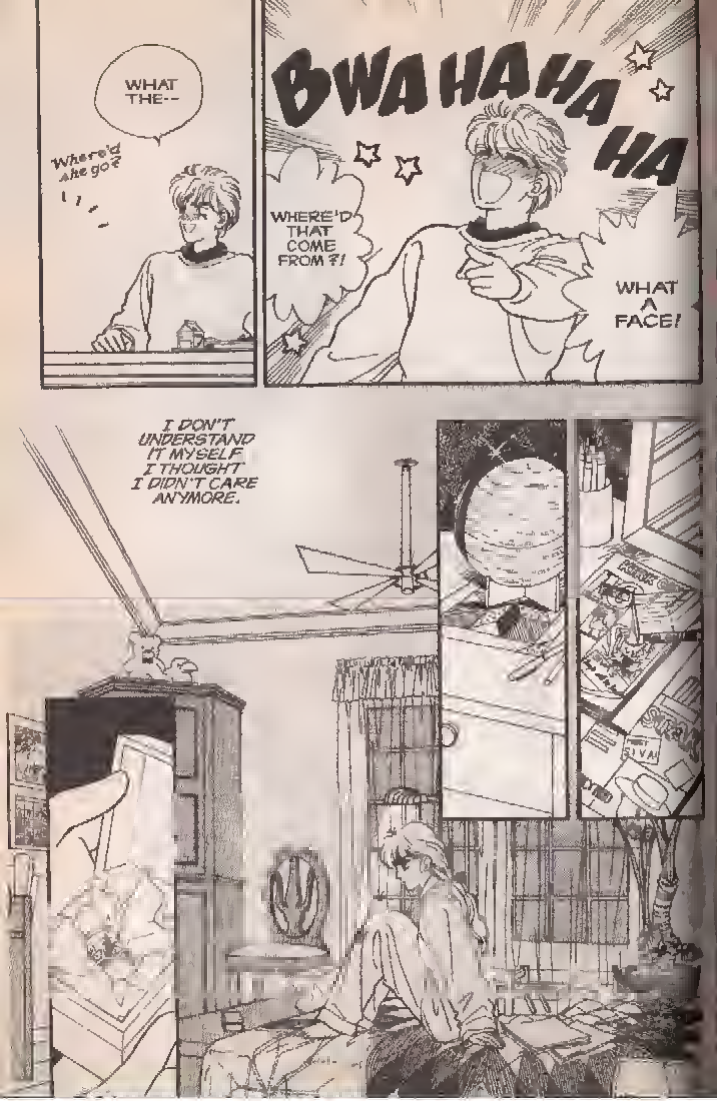
WHAT THE--
Where'd she go?
BWAHAHAHA
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!
WHAT A FACE!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF. I THOUGHT I DIDN'T CARE ANYMORE.

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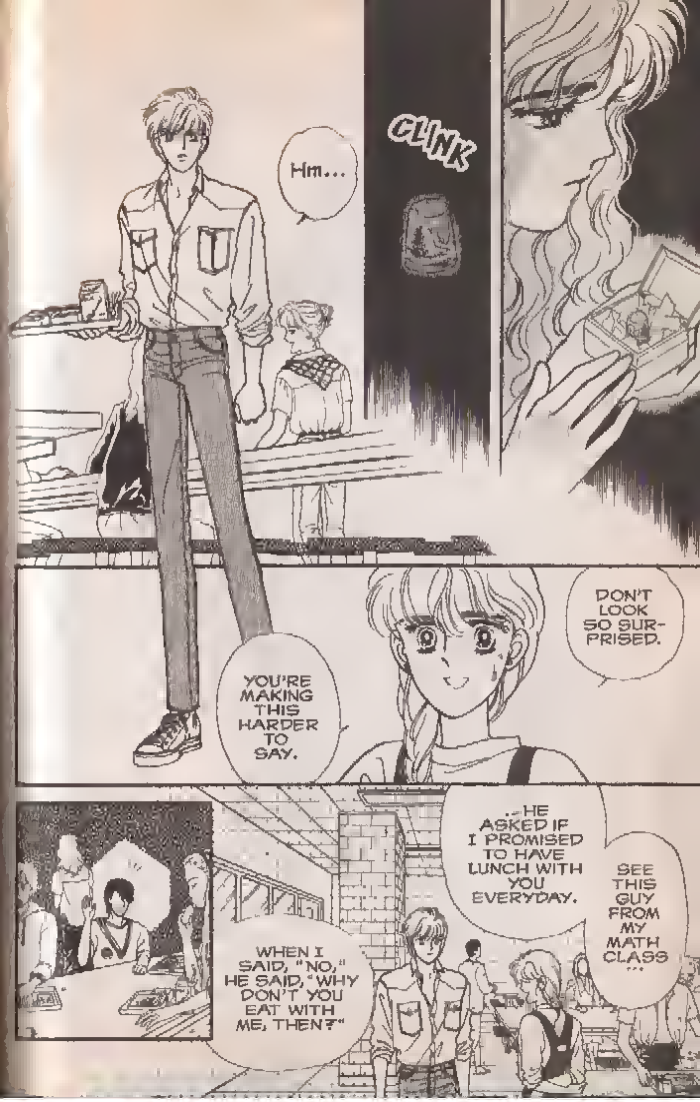
Hm...
CLINK
DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED.
YOU'RE MAKING THIS HARDER TO SAY.
SEE THIS GUY FROM MY MATH CLASS...
...HE ASKED IF I PROMISED TO HAVE LUNCH WITH YOU EVERYDAY.
WHEN I SAID, "NO," HE SAID, "WHY DON'T YOU EAT WITH ME, THEN?"

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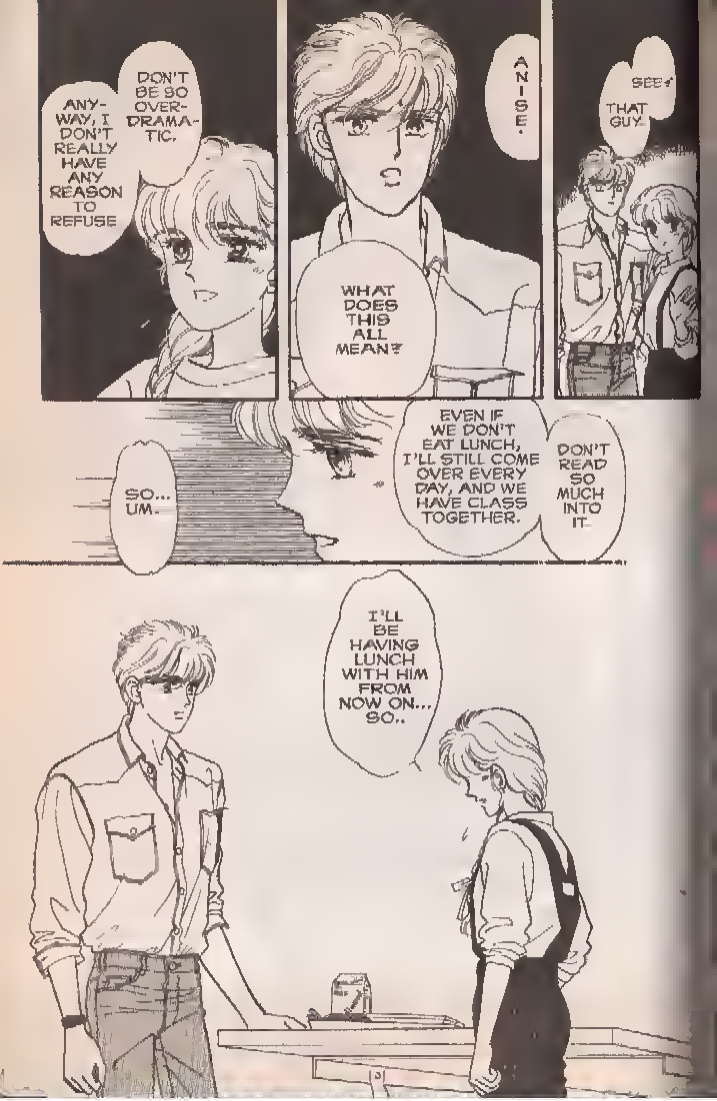
ANYWAY, I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY REASON TO REFUSE
DON'T BE SO OVERDRAMATIC.
ANISE.
WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?
SEE? THAT GUY.
SO... UM..
EVEN IF WE DON'T EAT LUNCH, I'LL STILL COME OVER EVERY DAY, AND WE HAVE CLASS TOGETHER.
DON'T READ SO MUCH INTO IT.
I'LL BE HAVING LUNCH WITH HIM FROM NOW ON... SO..

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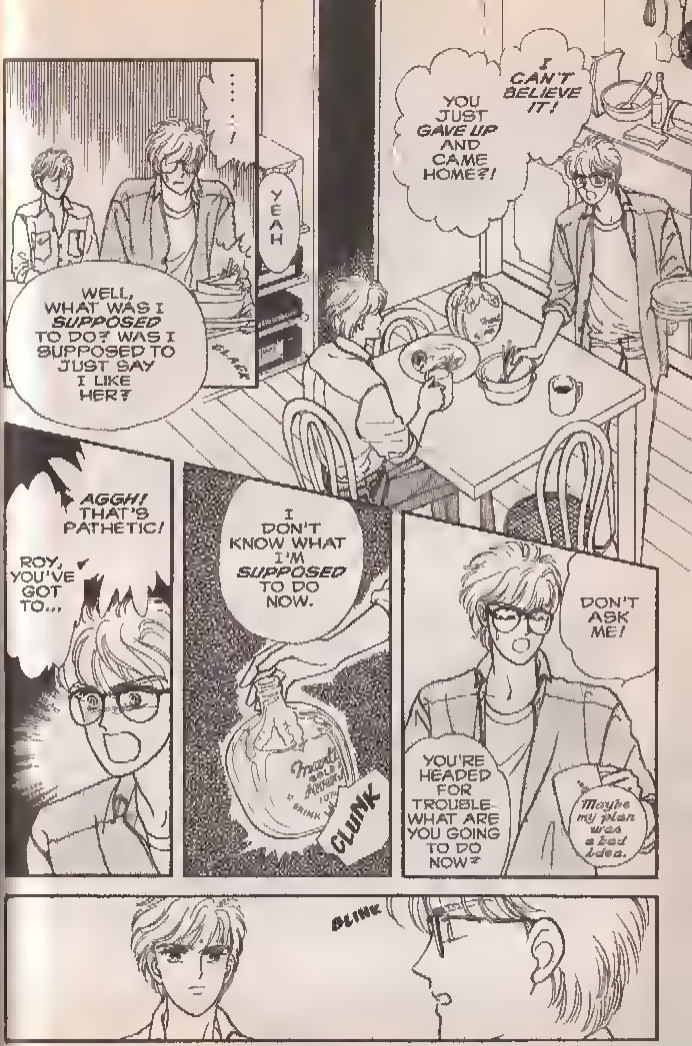
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
YOU JUST GAVE UP AND CAME HOME?!
. . . . . !
YEAH
WELL, WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO? WAS I SUPPOSED TO JUST SAY I LIKE HER?
CLACK
AGGH! THAT'S PATHETIC!
ROY, YOU'VE GOT TO...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO NOW.
Tropical Salt Drink
CLINK
DON'T ASK ME!
YOU'RE HEADED FOR TROUBLE- WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?
Maybe my plan was a bad idea.
BLINK

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YOU THINK I'M PATHETIC.
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO.
THE MORE I LIKE HER, THE MORE CONFUSED I GET.
ROY
IT'S NOTHING TO GET SO UPSET ABOUT.
THANKS, I KNOW I SHOULDN'T.
PHIL COLLINS SANG ABOUT IT.
HUH?
WELL, I'M GOING OUT.
WHERE?

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WELL, THAT'S GOOD.
YEAH.
IT'S BECAUSE OF ANISE, NOT THE CAR, ISN'T IT?
TO THE GA-RAGE
WHERE ELSE?
YOU WANTED TO START FIXING UP AN OLD CAR THERE WHEN YOU KNEW SHE WOULDN'T BE COMING HERE.
RIGHT?
BUT YOU FIRST CAME UP WITH THIS PLAN...
YOU WANTED A CAR FOR A WHILE.
...WHEN ANISE GOT IN TROUBLE COMING HOME FROM HERE.
.....
WELL...
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT

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CIPHER
サイファ

Scene5. THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN A HUNDRED YEARS

A

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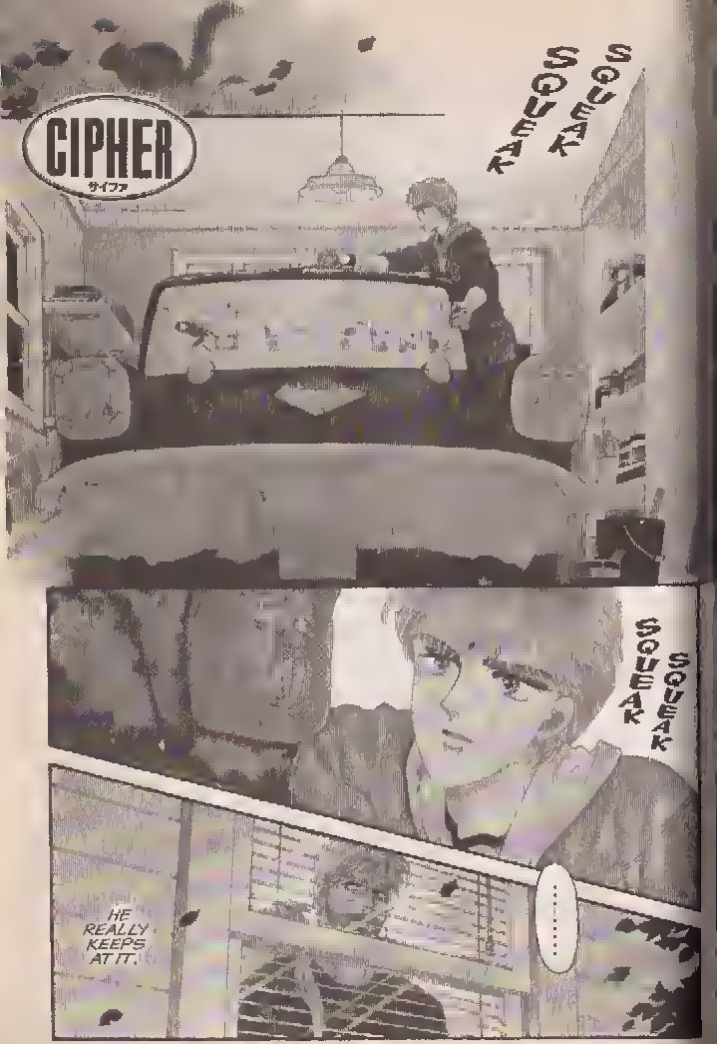

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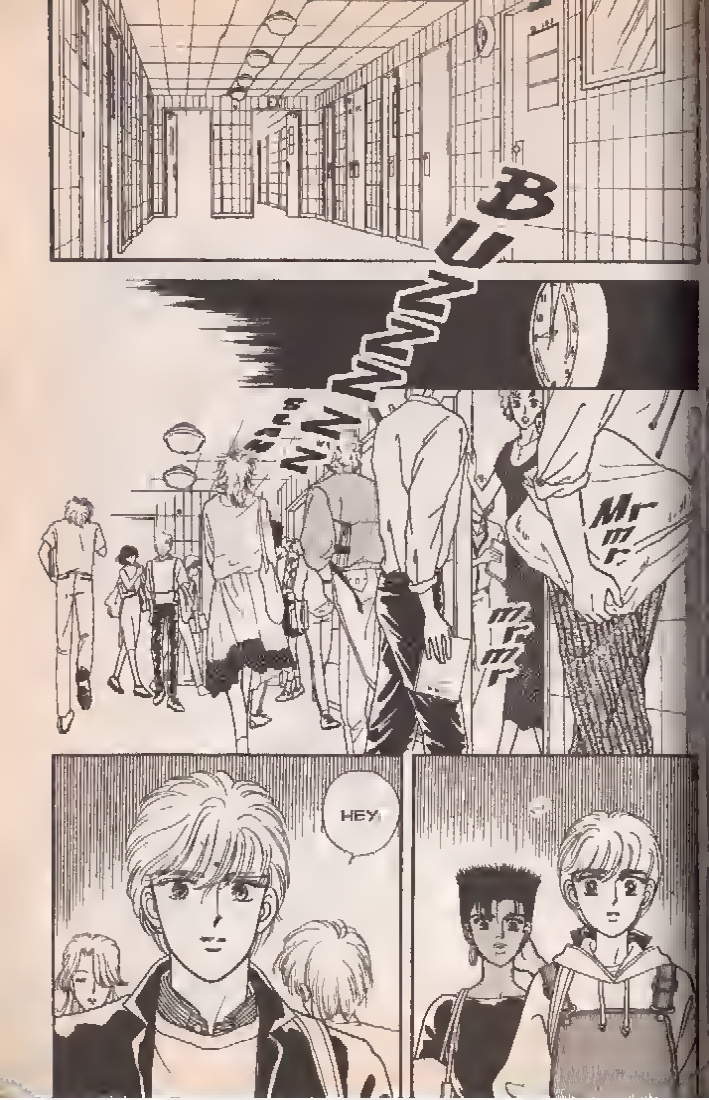

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Hannah's Fast Side
Hannah
SHE CAN TALK TO OTHERS SO EASILY.
HOW DID THINGS GET LIKE THIS?
MILK
SHE'S SO DISTANT.
I FEEL LIKE I CAN'T TALK TO HER.
SHE'S CLEARLY AVOIDING ME.

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WHERE'S CIPHER.. ISN'T HE HERE?
CIPHER.
WHAT? YOU LOOKING FOR SOMEBODY?
NOT REALLY.
UH...
HOW SHOULD I KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING FOR LUNCH?
ALL I HEARD WAS THAT FROM NOW ON, WE DON'T EAT LUNCH WITH YOU.
WELL...
CIPHER?

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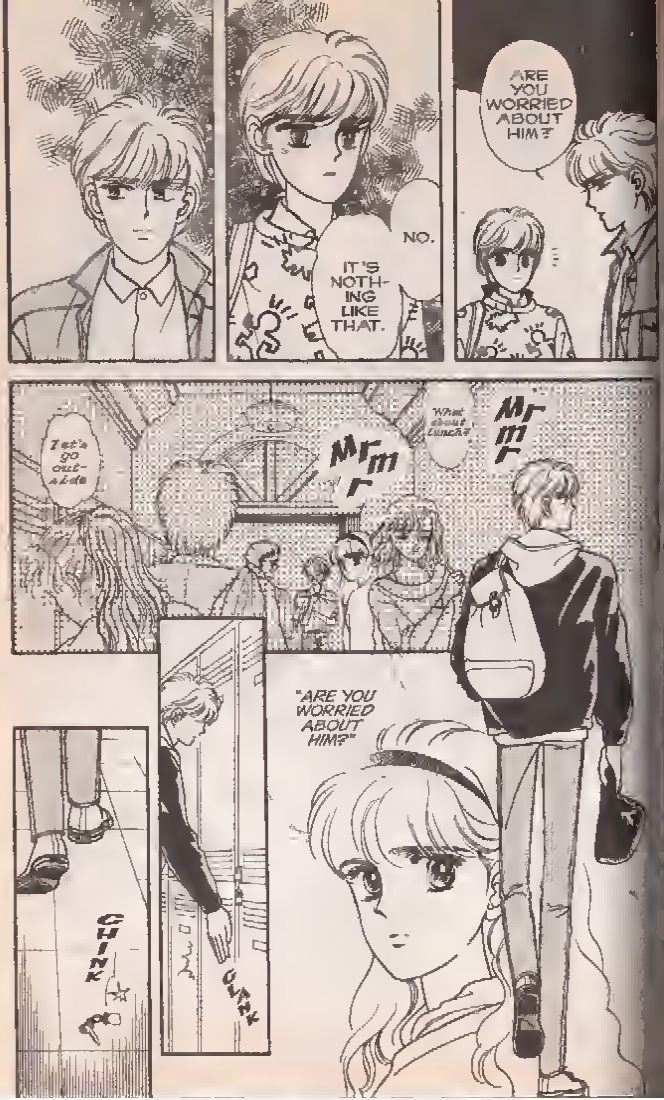

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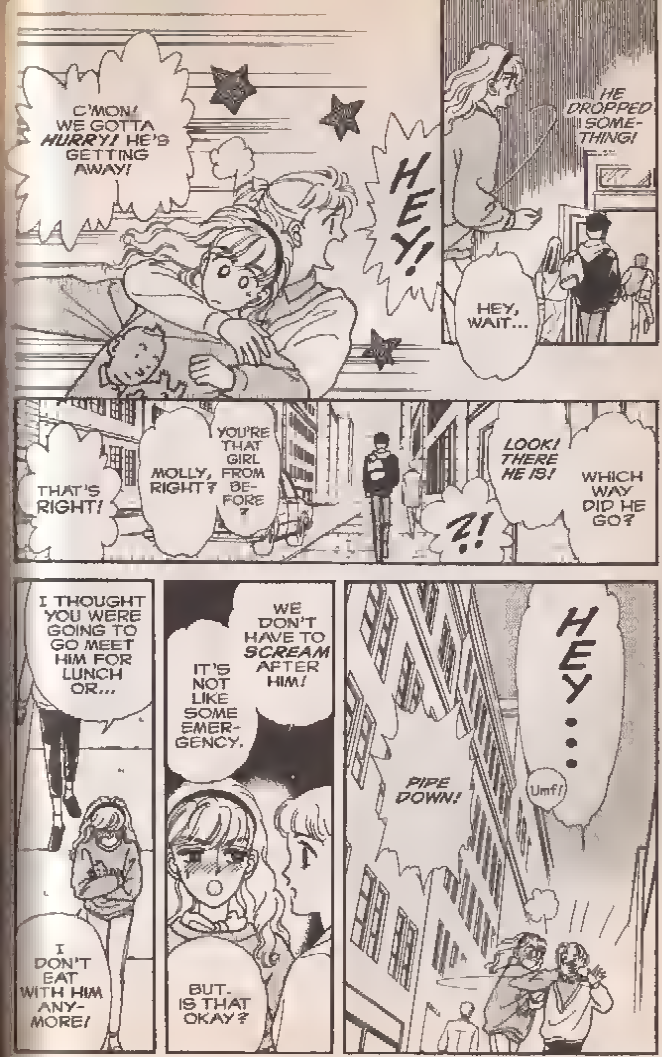

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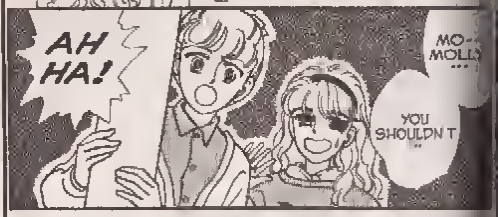
GOOD AFTERNOON!

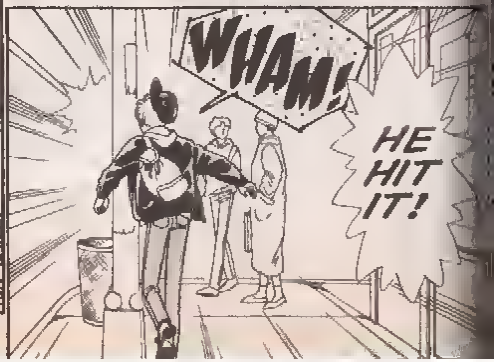
MY PONYTAIL IS GETTING LONGER, AND "CIPHER" HAS NOW REACHED VOLUME 5. IT'S GONE BY QUICKLY BUT IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE THE SERIES STARTED SERIALIZATION.

RECENTLY MY HEALTH HASN'T BEEN TOO GOOD. MY STOMACH IS KINDA WEAK AND I FEEL LIKE PUKING. I'VE BEEN ANEMIC, CATCHING COLDS—I'M A WRECK. MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE MY WORKLOAD HAS INCREASED, I'VE BEEN PRETTY BUSY.

THE SOURCE OF MY STRENGTH JUST LIKE ALWAYS, HAS BEEN THE THOMPSON TWINS. THE MAGAZINE "SMASH HITS" DIDN'T RATE IT TOO WELL, BUT I REALLY LOVE THEIR NEW SINGLE "GET THAT LOVE". I LISTEN TO IT ENDLESSLY WHILE I WORK.

THIS TIME, I'LL DRAW HIM REALISTICALLY





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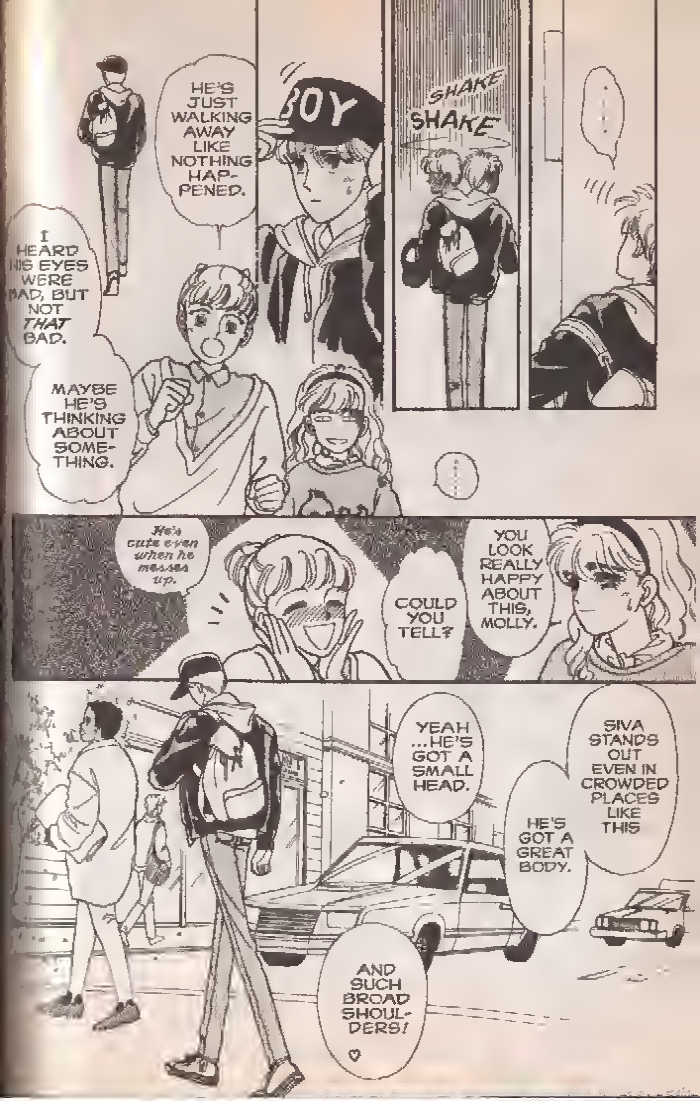
HE'S JUST WALKING AWAY LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED.
BOY
SHAKE
SHAKE
I HEARD HIS EYES WERE BAD, BUT NOT THAT BAD.
MAYBE HE'S THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING.
He's cute even when he messes up.
COULD YOU TELL?
YOU LOOK REALLY HAPPY ABOUT THIS, MOLLY.
YEAH ...HE'S GOT A SMALL HEAD.
SIVA STANDS OUT EVEN IN CROWDED PLACES LIKE THIS
HE'S GOT A GREAT BODY.
AND SUCH BROAD SHOULDERS! ♡

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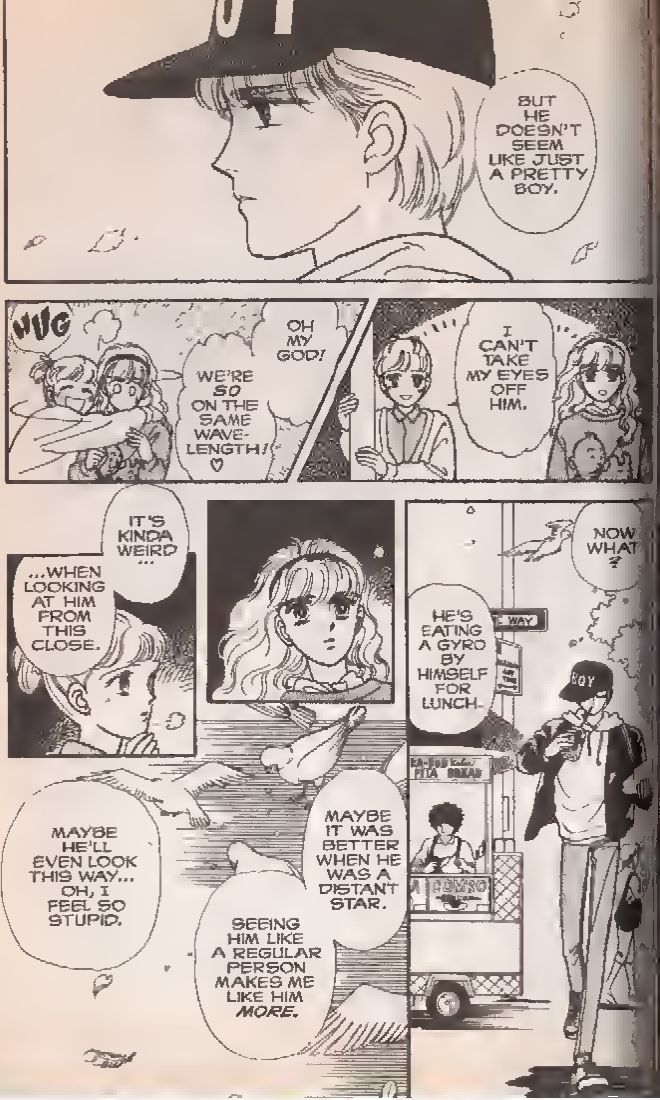
BUT HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE JUST A PRETTY BOY.
OH MY GOD!
WE'RE SO ON THE SAME WAVE-LENGTH! ♡
I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM.
IT'S KINDA WEIRD ...
...WHEN LOOKING AT HIM FROM THIS CLOSE.
NOW WHAT ?
HE'S EATING A GYRO BY HIMSELF FOR LUNCH.
MAYBE HE'LL EVEN LOOK THIS WAY... OH, I FEEL SO STUPID.
SEEING HIM LIKE A REGULAR PERSON MAKES ME LIKE HIM MORE.
MAYBE IT WAS BETTER WHEN HE WAS A DISTANT STAR.

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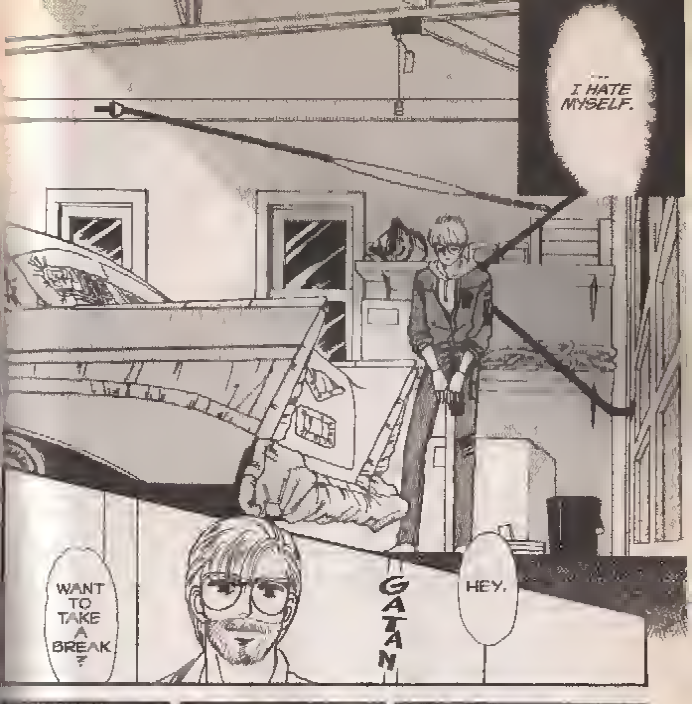

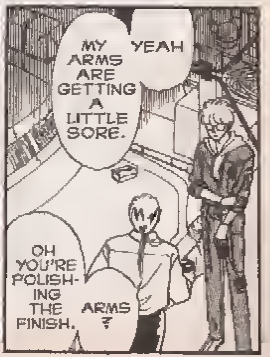

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THIS CHEVY... IT'S A GREAT CAR. REALLY GREAT!
UH... DON'T GET SO DOWN ABOUT IT.
SSHH
IT SEEMS LIKE SHE'S BEEN AVOIDING ME LATELY.
I REALLY BLEW IT.
I'LL BET YOU CAN TELL THE MAKE AND YEAR IN ONE LOOK.
DO YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT CARS?
WOW!
NO, THIS CAR IS JUST SPECIAL.
IT'S THE SAME AS THE FIRST CAR I EVER DROVE
THE BEATLES
THE YEAR SHE WAS BORN. 1969?
KING AND BOBBY KENNEDY WERE SHOT... IN '68.
THE MOON LANDING?
THAT WAS JULY.
IT WAS WHEN I WAS THE SAME AGE ANISE IS NOW.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN AUGUST THE YEAR ANISE WAS BORN?

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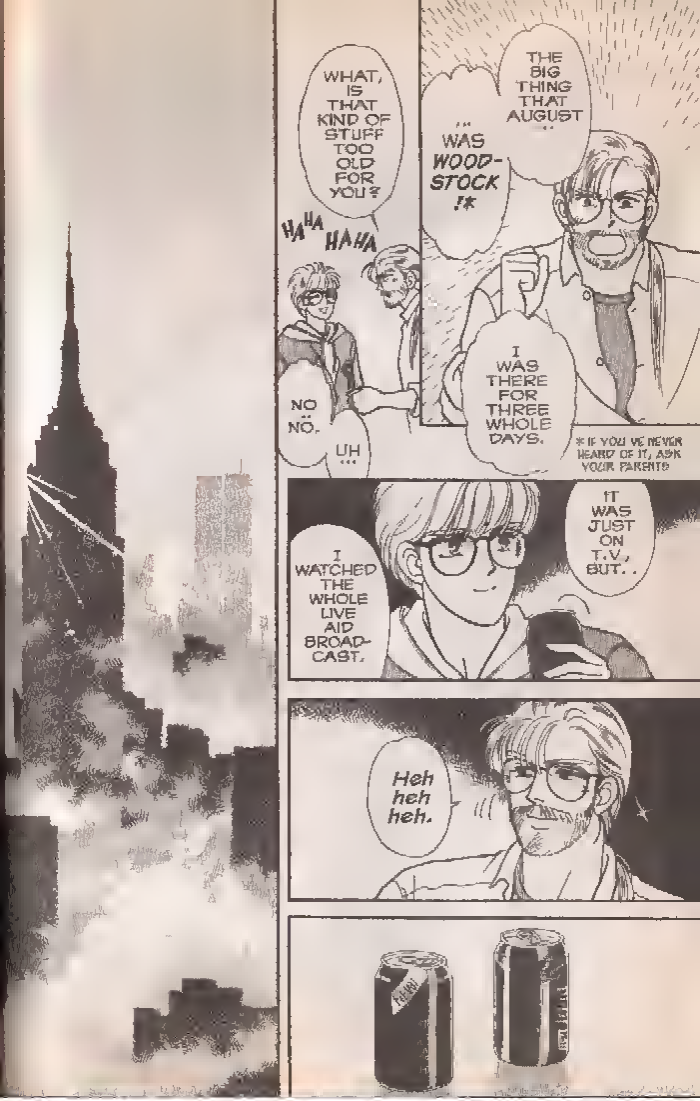
WHAT, IS THAT KIND OF STUFF TOO OLD FOR YOU?
HA HA HAHA
NO .. NO.
UH ...
THE BIG THING THAT AUGUST ..
.. WAS WOOD-STOCK !*
I WAS THERE FOR THREE WHOLE DAYS.
* IF YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT, ASK YOUR PARENTS
I WATCHED THE WHOLE LIVE AID BROAD-CAST.
IT WAS JUST ON T.V., BUT..
Heh heh heh.

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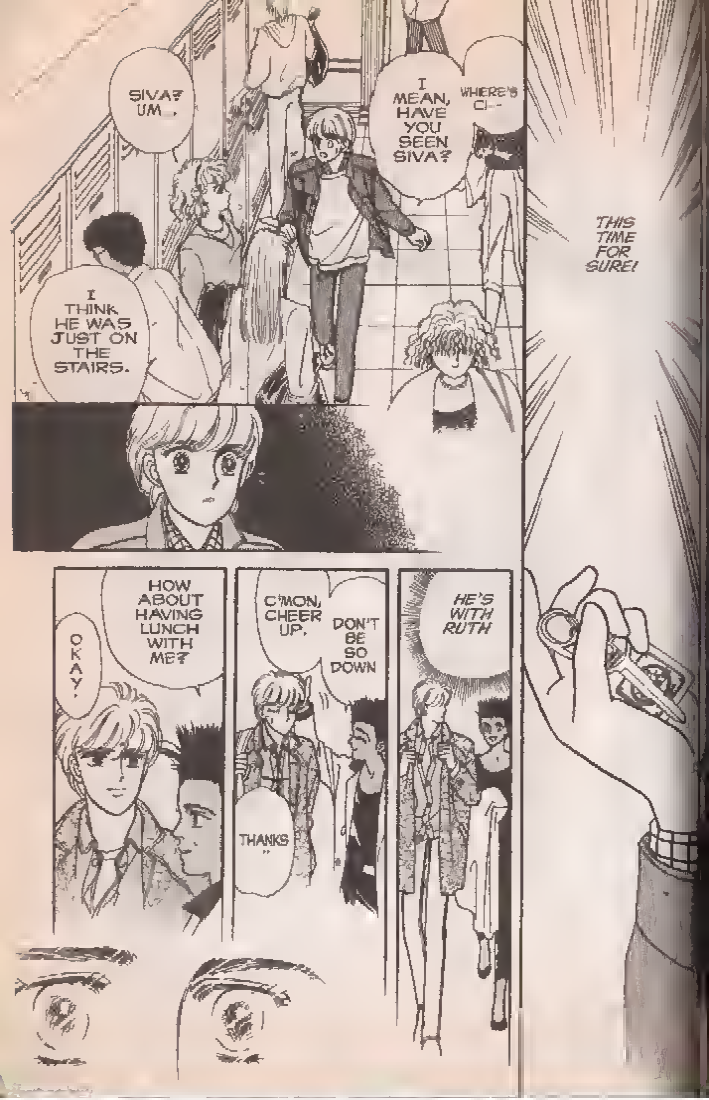

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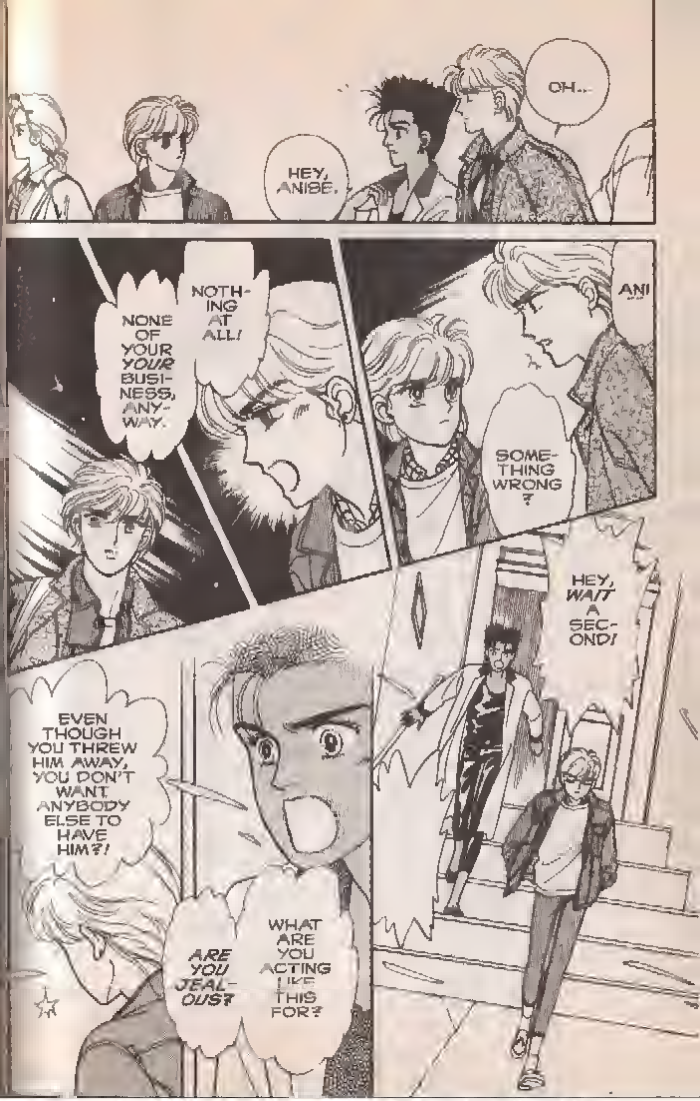
OH...
HEY, ANIBE.
ANI
SOMETHING WRONG?
NOTHING AT ALL!
NONE OF YOUR YOUR BUSINESS, ANYWAY.
HEY, WAIT A SECOND!
WHAT ARE YOU ACTING LIKE THIS FOR?
ARE YOU JEALOUS?
EVEN THOUGH YOU THREW HIM AWAY, YOU DON'T WANT ANYBODY ELSE TO HAVE HIM?!

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THE ONLY ONE WHO'S SUPPOSED TO MESS HIS HAIR AND HAVE LUNCH WITH HIM IS ME!
THAT'S RIGHT!
BUT ...
...I LIKE YOU, TOO, RUTH.
SO YOU FINALLY FIGURED THAT OUT, HUH?
.....
IN THAT CASE, I'LL ...

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SQUEEZE
WHAT ... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
YOU'RE SO NAÏVE... I'M NOT AS GOOD A FRIEND AS YOU THI--
.....
ANISE... WHY DON'T YOU COME TO MY HOUSE TODAY?
WE CAN HANG OUT.
Pringles
Pringles
diet

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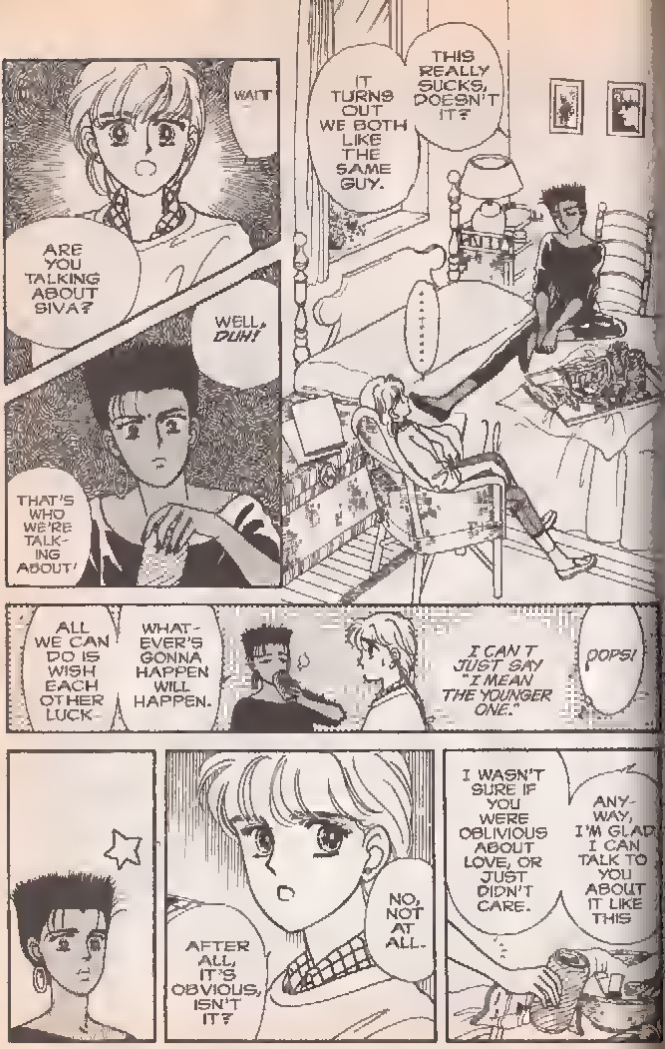
WAIT
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT SIVA?
WELL, DUH!
THAT'S WHO WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!
IT TURNS OUT WE BOTH LIKE THE SAME GUY.
THIS REALLY SUCKS, DOESN'T IT?
ALL WE CAN DO IS WISH EACH OTHER LUCK-
WHATEVER'S GONNA HAPPEN WILL HAPPEN.
I CAN'T JUST SAY "I MEAN THE YOUNGER ONE."
OOPS!
NO, NOT AT ALL.
AFTER ALL, IT'S OBVIOUS, ISN'T IT?
I WASN'T SURE IF YOU WERE OBLIVIOUS ABOUT LOVE, OR JUST DIDN'T CARE.
ANYWAY, I'M GLAD I CAN TALK TO YOU ABOUT IT LIKE THIS

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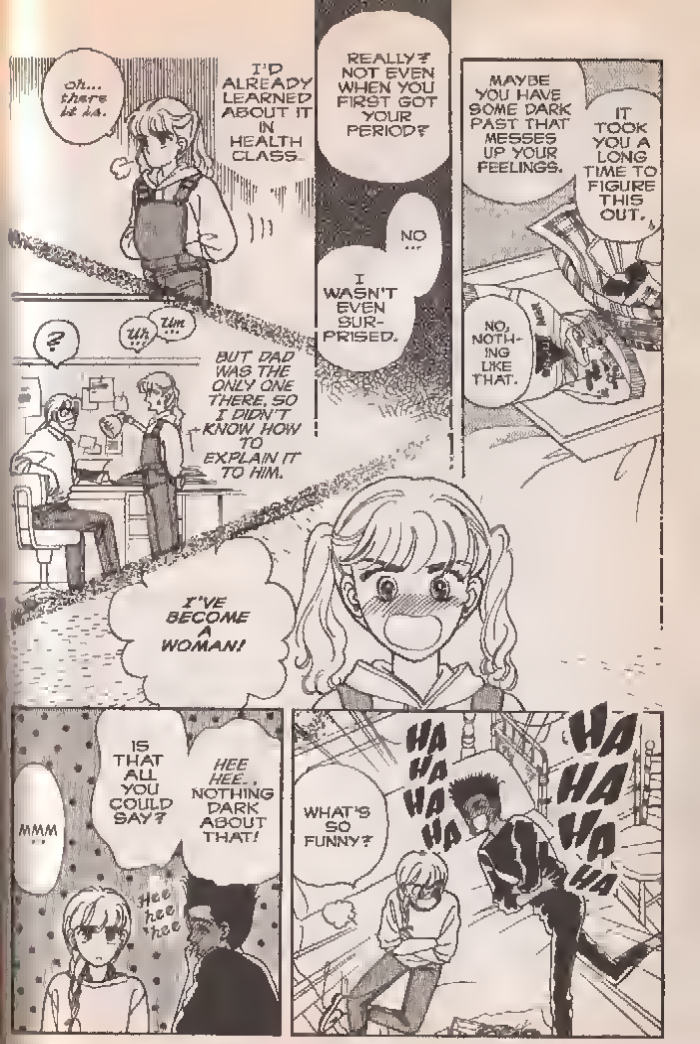
oh... there it is.
I'D ALREADY LEARNED ABOUT IT IN HEALTH CLASS.
REALLY? NOT EVEN WHEN YOU FIRST GOT YOUR PERIOD?
NO...
I WASN'T EVEN SURPRISED.
MAYBE YOU HAVE SOME DARK PAST THAT MESSES UP YOUR FEELINGS.
IT TOOK YOU A LONG TIME TO FIGURE THIS OUT.
NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT.
?
Uh, Um...
BUT DAD WAS THE ONLY ONE THERE, SO I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT TO HIM.
I'VE BECOME A WOMAN!
MMM...
IS THAT ALL YOU COULD SAY?
HEE HEE.. NOTHING DARK ABOUT THAT!
Hee hee hee
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA

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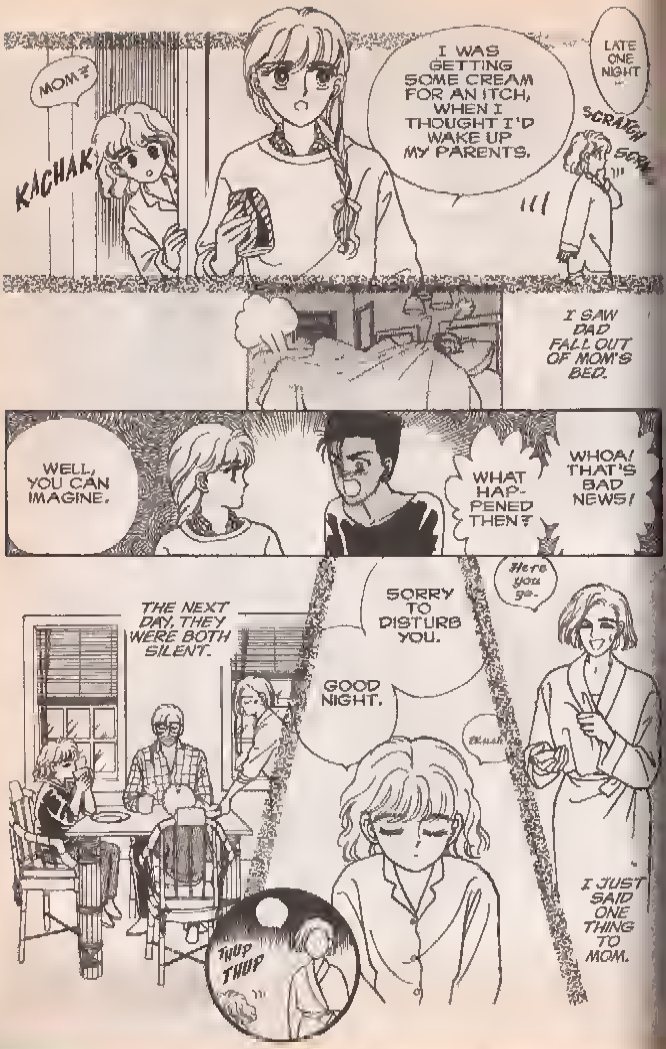
MOM?
KACHAK
I WAS GETTING SOME CREAM FOR AN ITCH, WHEN I THOUGHT I'D WAKE UP MY PARENTS.
LATE ONE NIGHT
SCRATCH
SCRA
I SAW DAD FALL OUT OF MOM'S BED.
WELL, YOU CAN IMAGINE.
WHAT HAP-PENED THEN?
WHOA! THAT'S BAD NEWS!
THE NEXT DAY, THEY WERE BOTH SILENT.
SORRY TO DISTURB YOU.
GOOD NIGHT.
Here you go.
THUD THUD
I JUST SAID ONE THING TO MOM.

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I nodded silently.
NOD
AND IT WAS ALL CAUSED BY MY SKIN ALLERGY.
I WAS ALWAYS MIS-TAKEN FOR A BOY.
I ALWAYS HAD TO KEEP MY HAIR SHORT.
BUT THAT'S JUST PHYSICAL.
NOT AT ALL! IT WAS ALSO PSY-CHO-LOGI-CAL.
I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS SO FUNNY.
I GUESS THIS SKIN CONDITION IS MY "DARK PAST."
ANISE AGE 7
WHAT?!
THICK EYE-BROWS
SHORT HAIR
LOVED SPORTS
LOUD VOICE
NO BREASTS, OF COURSE
PIERCED EARS?
I GOT USED TO PEOPLE SAYING "SHE LOOKS LIKE A BOY." ONE DAY...

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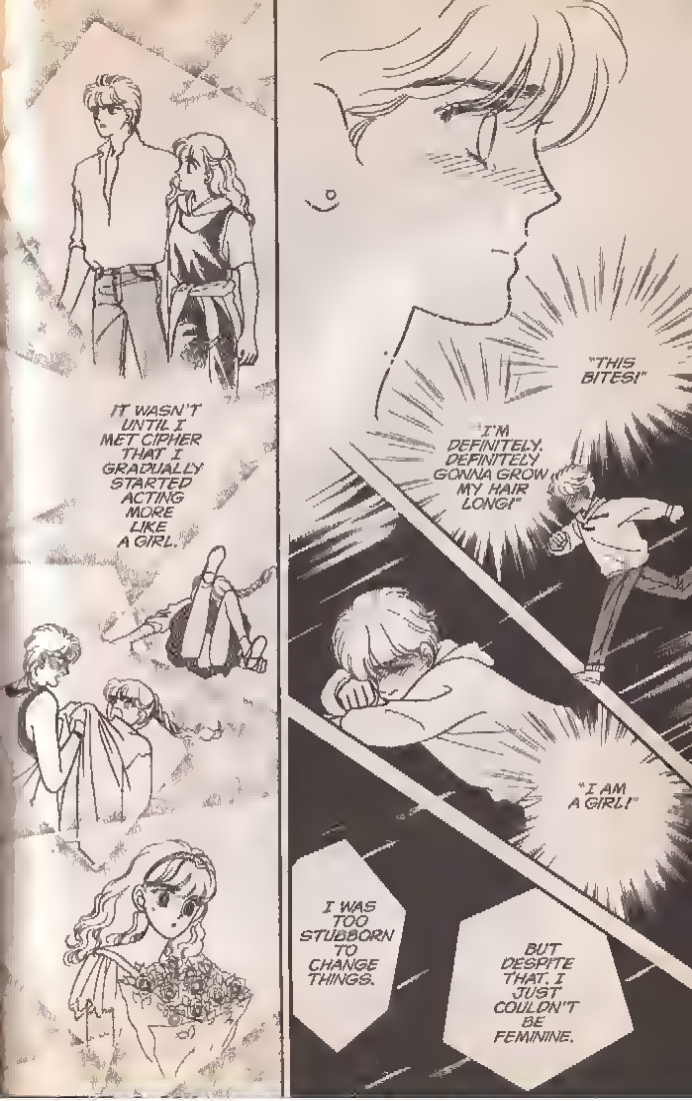
IT WASN'T UNTIL I MET CIPHER THAT I GRADUALLY STARTED ACTING MORE LIKE A GIRL.
"THIS BITES!"
"I'M DEFINITELY, DEFINITELY GONNA GROW MY HAIR LONG!"
"I AM A GIRL!"
I WAS TOO STUBBORN TO CHANGE THINGS.
BUT DESPITE THAT, I JUST COULDN'T BE FEMININE.

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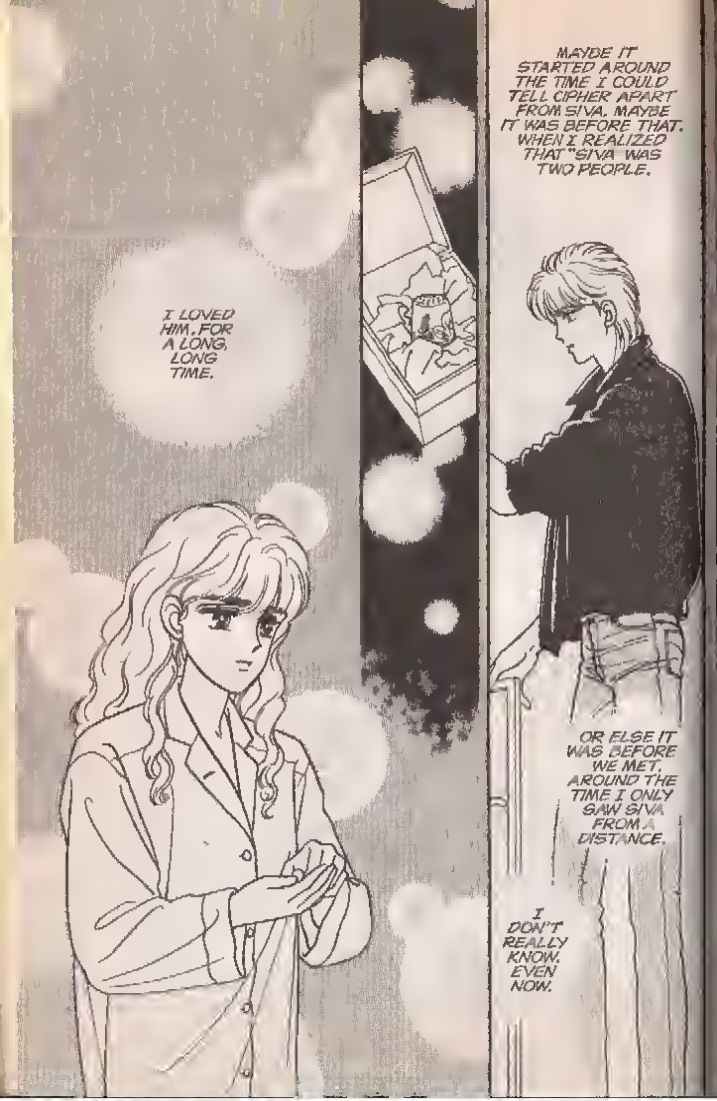
I LOVED HIM. FOR A LONG, LONG TIME.
MAYBE IT STARTED AROUND THE TIME I COULD TELL CIPHER APART FROM SIVA. MAYBE IT WAS BEFORE THAT. WHEN I REALIZED THAT "SIVA" WAS TWO PEOPLE.
OR ELSE IT WAS BEFORE WE MET. AROUND THE TIME I ONLY SAW SIVA FROM A DISTANCE.
I DON'T REALLY KNOW. EVEN NOW.

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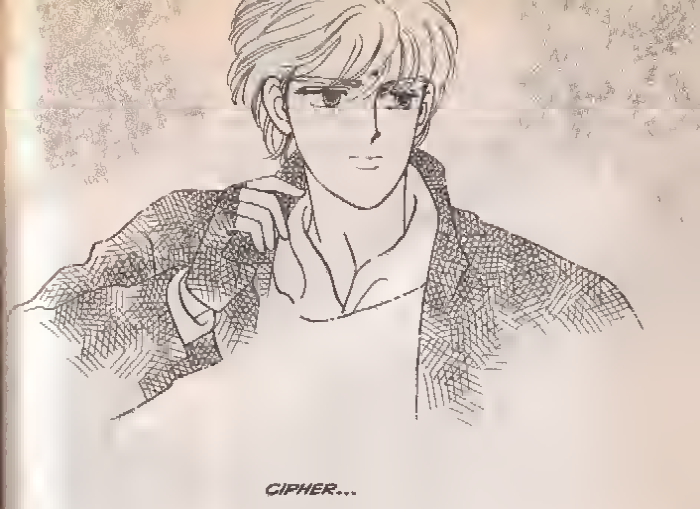

CIPHER...

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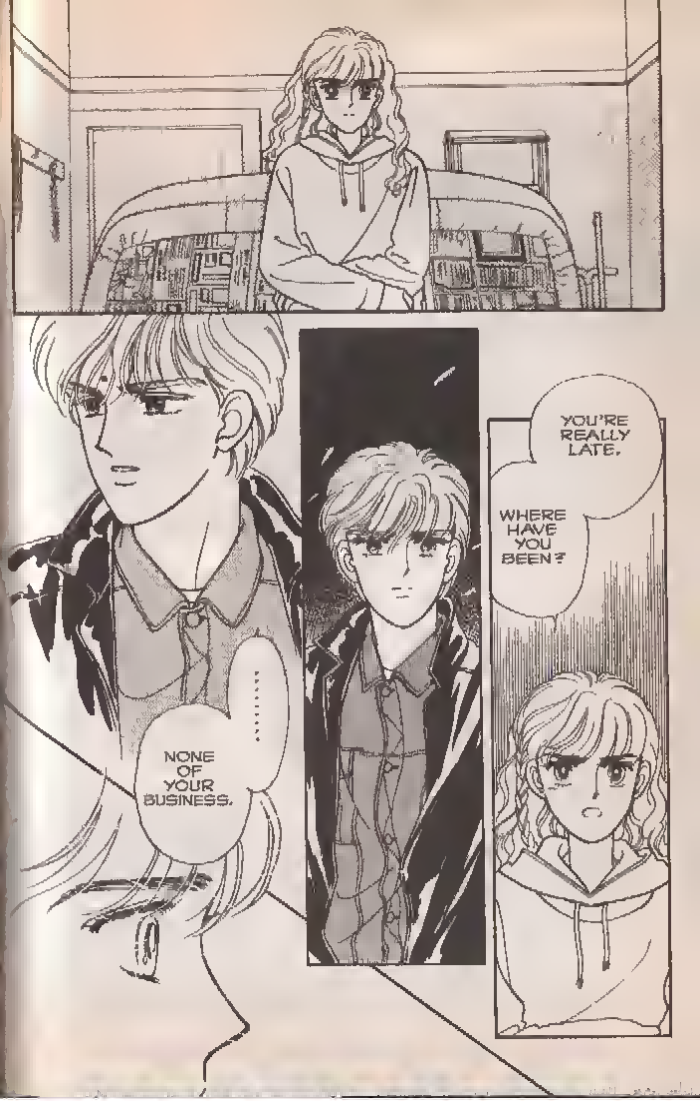

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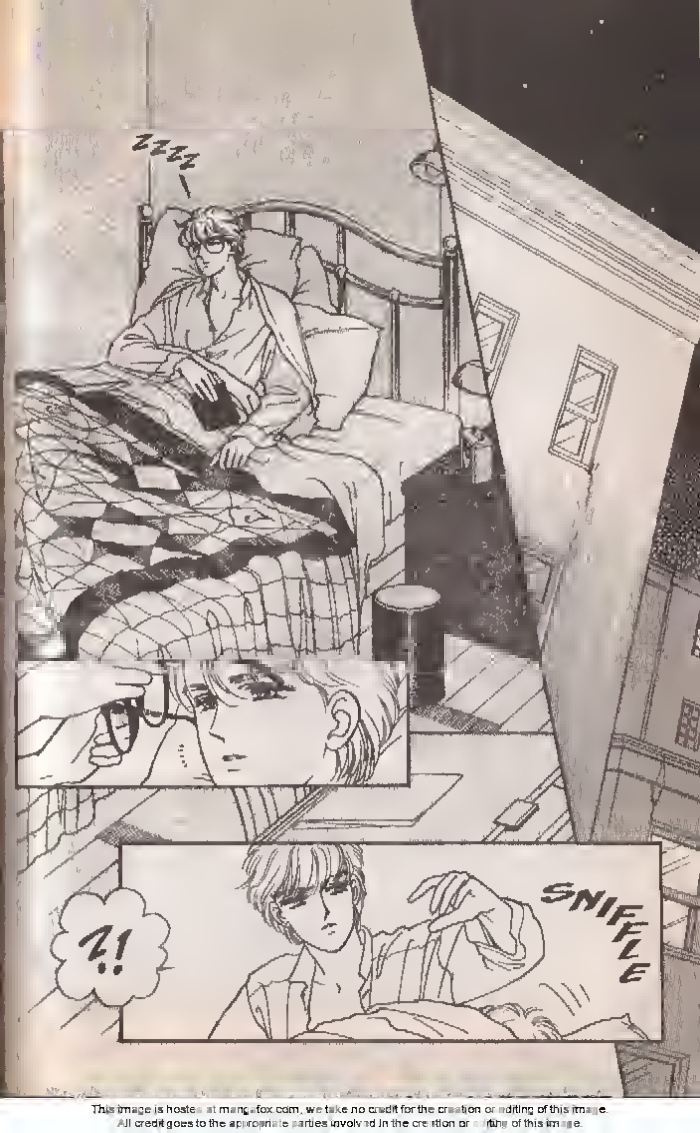

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I CAN'T FIND THE KEY.
WHAT KEY?
I GUESS YOU ALREADY ARE.
DID YOU HAVE A BAD DREAM?
OKAY IF I SLEEP HERE TO-NIGHT?
OH.. SORRY.
YOU SCARED ME. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
ROY ?!
I LOST THE KEY TO MY CAR.
SO I CAN'T DRIVE IT, EVEN IF I FIX IT.
YOU HAD ANOTHER FIGHT WITH ANISE, DIDN'T YOU?
DON'T BE SO DE-PRESSED
YOU HAVE A SPARE, DON'T YOU?

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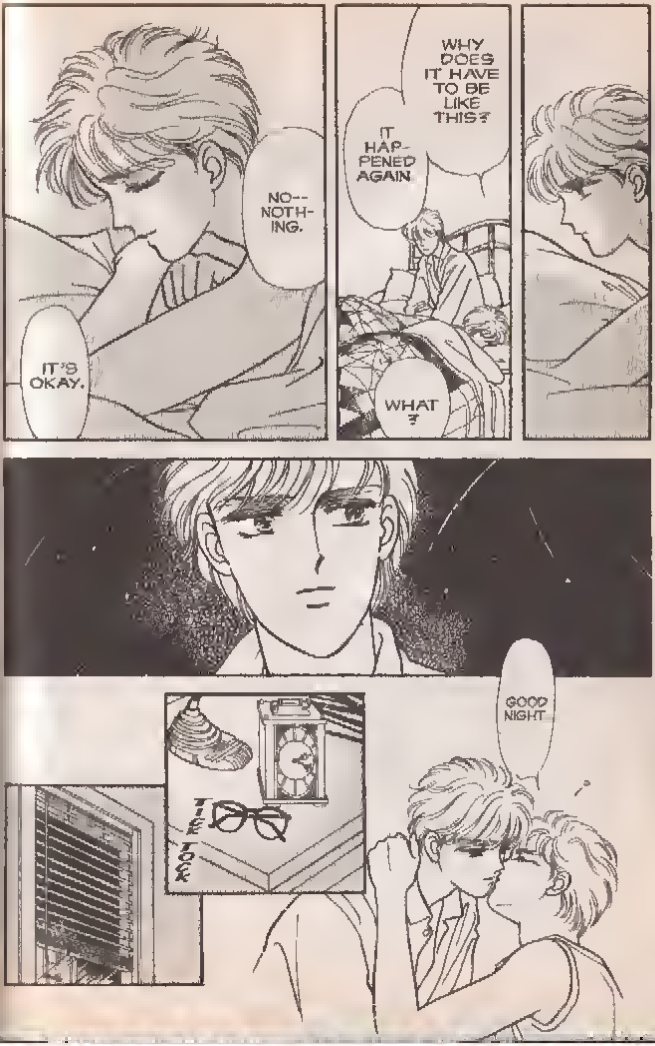

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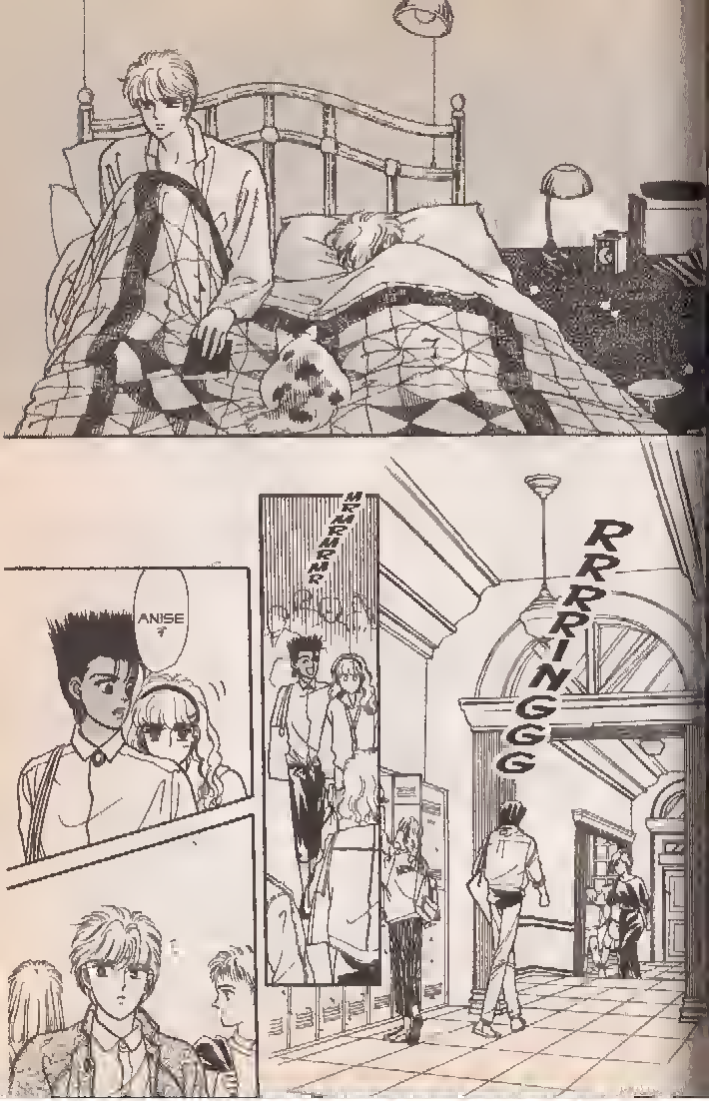

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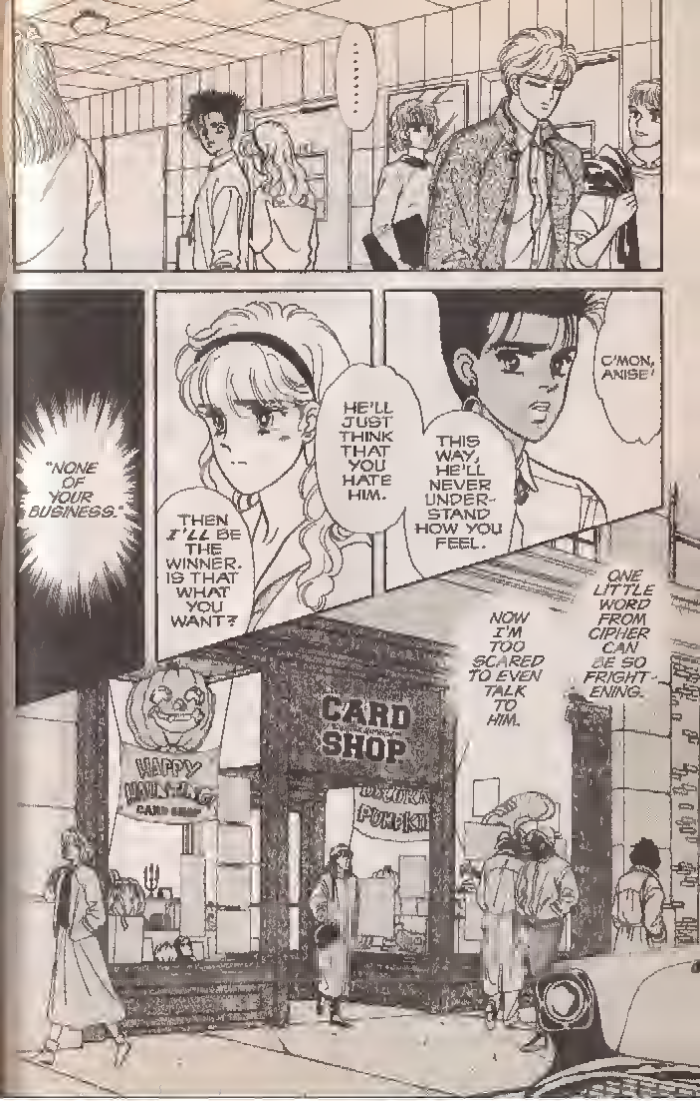
.....
C'MON, ANISE!
THIS WAY, HE'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL.
HE'LL JUST THINK THAT YOU HATE HIM.
THEN I'LL BE THE WINNER. IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
"NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS."
ONE LITTLE WORD FROM CIPHER CAN BE SO FRIGHTENING.
NOW I'M TOO SCARED TO EVEN TALK TO HIM.
CARD SHOP
HAPPY
CARD SHOP
PUMPKIN

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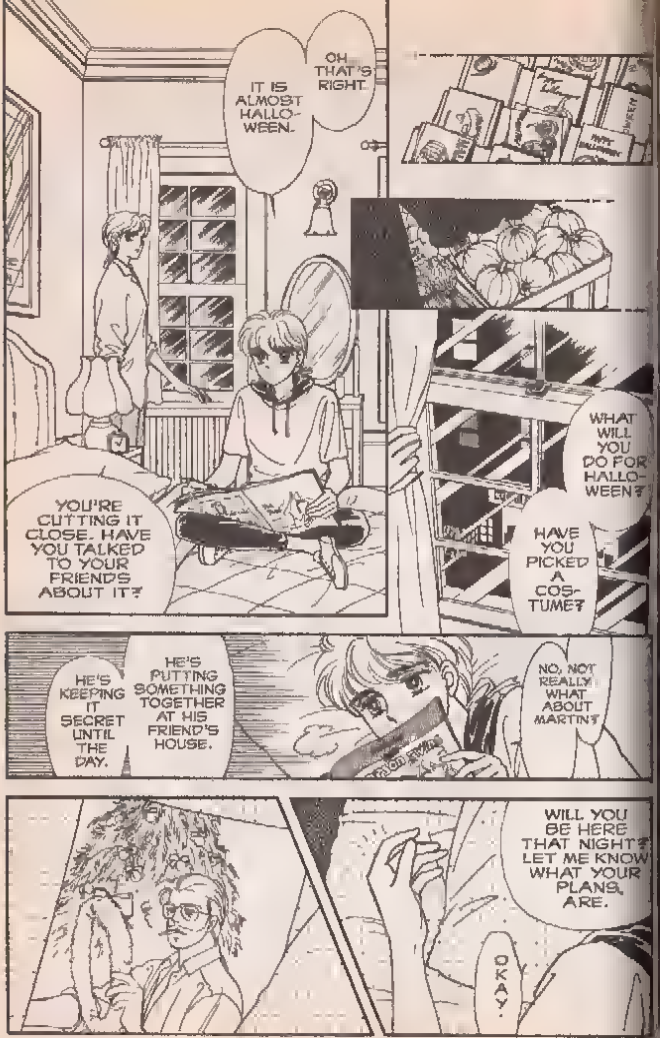
OH, THAT'S RIGHT.
IT IS ALMOST HALLOWEEN.
YOU'RE CUTTING IT CLOSE. HAVE YOU TALKED TO YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT IT?
HAVE YOU PICKED A COSTUME?
WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR HALLOWEEN?
NO, NOT REALLY. WHAT ABOUT MARTIN?
HE'S PUTTING SOMETHING TOGETHER AT HIS FRIEND'S HOUSE.
HE'S KEEPING IT SECRET UNTIL THE DAY.
WILL YOU BE HERE THAT NIGHT? LET ME KNOW WHAT YOUR PLANS ARE.
OKAY.

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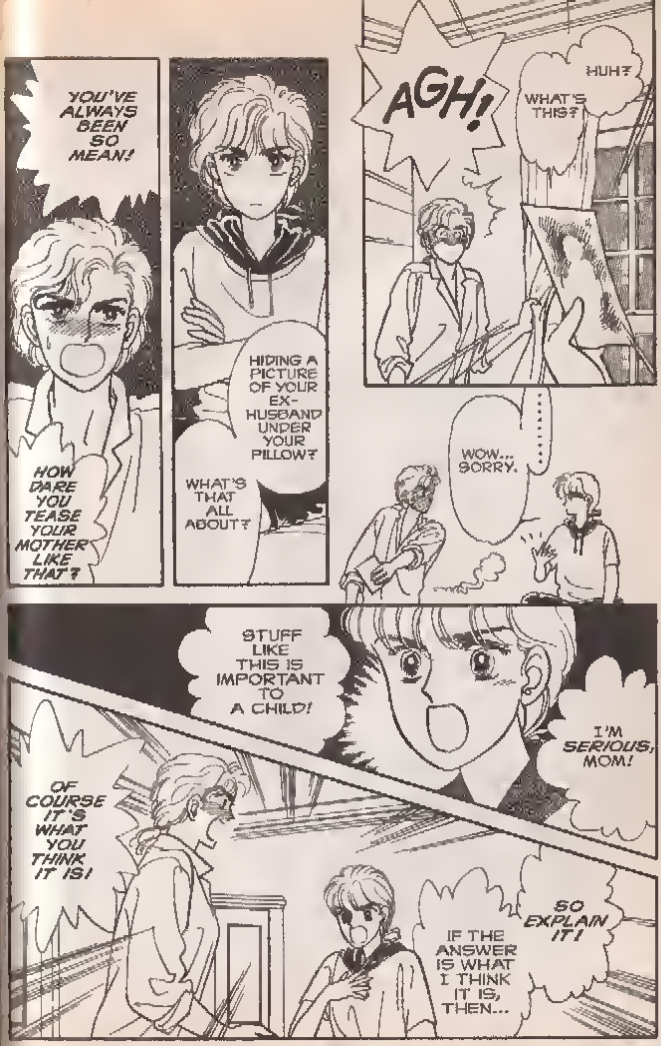
AGH!
HUH?
WHAT'S THIS?
WOW... SORRY.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN SO MEAN!
HIDING A PICTURE OF YOUR EX-HUSBAND UNDER YOUR PILLOW?
WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?
HOW DARE YOU TEASE YOUR MOTHER LIKE THAT?
STUFF LIKE THIS IS IMPORTANT TO A CHILD!
I'M SERIOUS, MOM!
OF COURSE IT'S WHAT YOU THINK IT IS!
SO EXPLAIN IT!
IF THE ANSWER IS WHAT I THINK IT IS, THEN...

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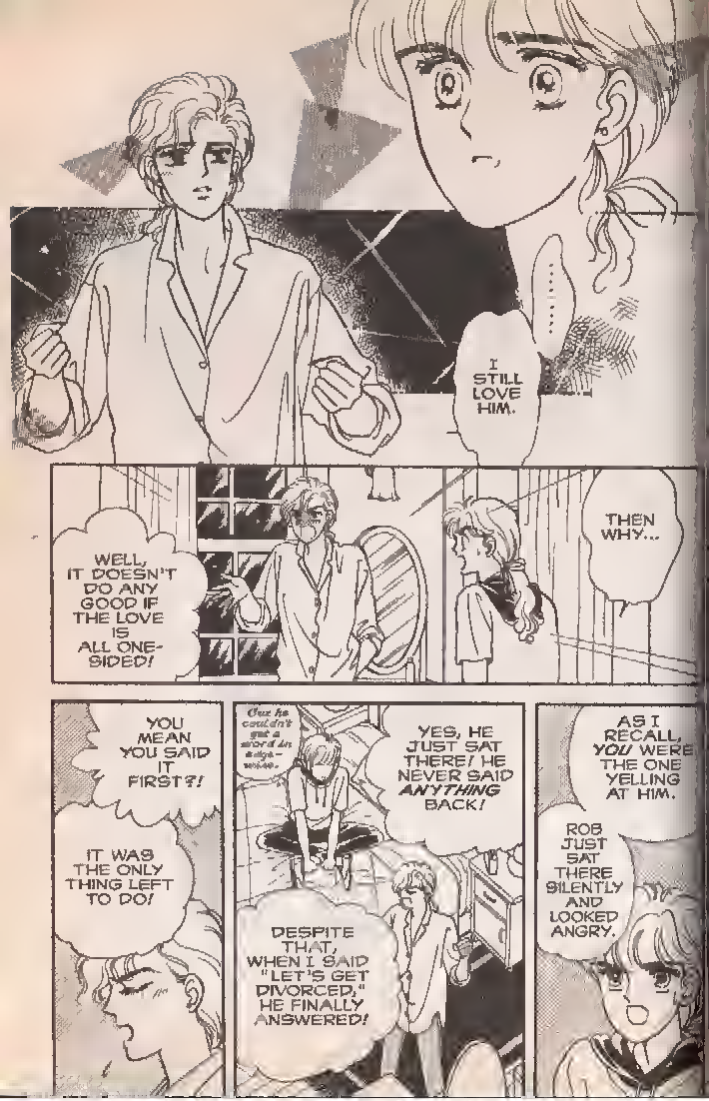
I STILL LOVE HIM.
.....
THEN WHY...
WELL, IT DOESN'T DO ANY GOOD IF THE LOVE IS ALL ONE-SIDED!
YOU MEAN YOU SAID IT FIRST?!
IT WAS THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO!
Cuz he couldn't get a word in edgewise.
YES, HE JUST SAT THERE! HE NEVER SAID ANYTHING BACK!
DESPITE THAT, WHEN I SAID "LET'S GET DIVORCED," HE FINALLY ANSWERED!
AS I RECALL, YOU WERE THE ONE YELLING AT HIM.
ROB JUST SAT THERE SILENTLY AND LOOKED ANGRY.

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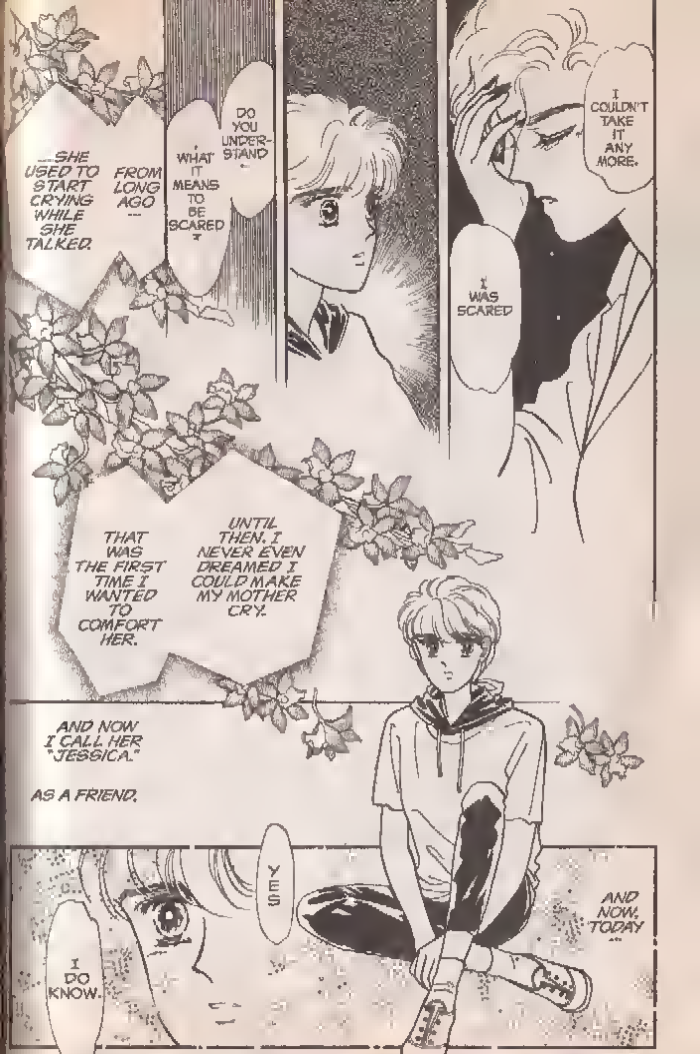
I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE.
I WAS SCARED
DO YOU UNDER-STAND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SCARED?
—SHE USED TO START CRYING WHILE SHE TALKED.
FROM LONG AGO ...
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I WANTED TO COMFORT HER.
UNTIL THEN, I NEVER EVEN DREAMED I COULD MAKE MY MOTHER CRY.
AND NOW I CALL HER "JESSICA."
AS A FRIEND.
I DO KNOW.
YES
AND NOW, TODAY ...

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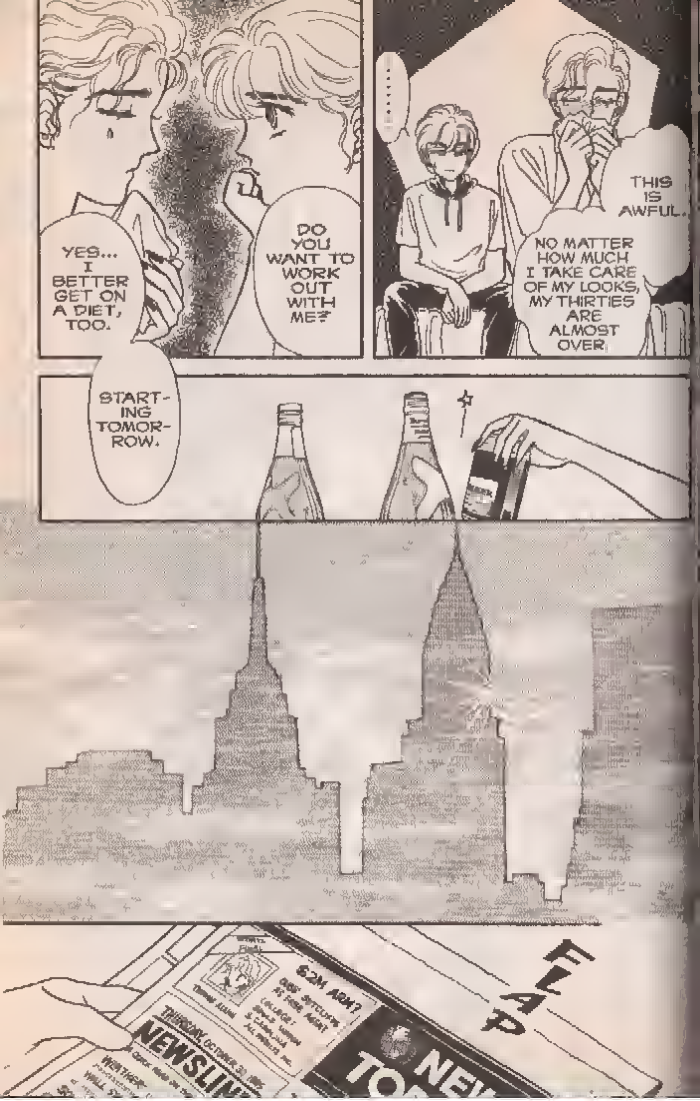

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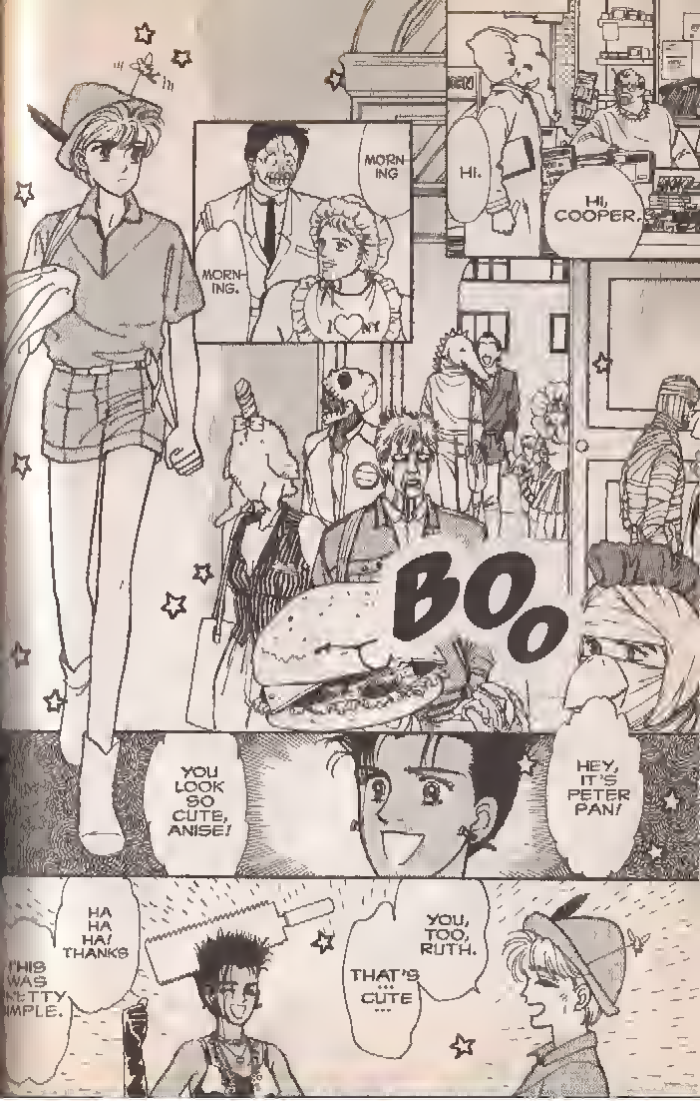

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SO, DID YOU PIN UP YOUR HAIR?
ANISE ?!
I JUST FELT LIKE A CHANGE.
YOU CUT YOUR HAIR?!
WHY'D YOU CHOP IT SO SHORT?!
A CHANGE?
ALL RIGHT I WON'T ASK ANY MORE.
AND THAT CUT DOES SUIT YOU.
REALLY ?
Thanks!
BUT IT LOOKS A LITTLE REDDER THAN BEFORE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ?!
THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BLONDE AND A REDHEAD.
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU GETTING SO MIFFED ABOUT?

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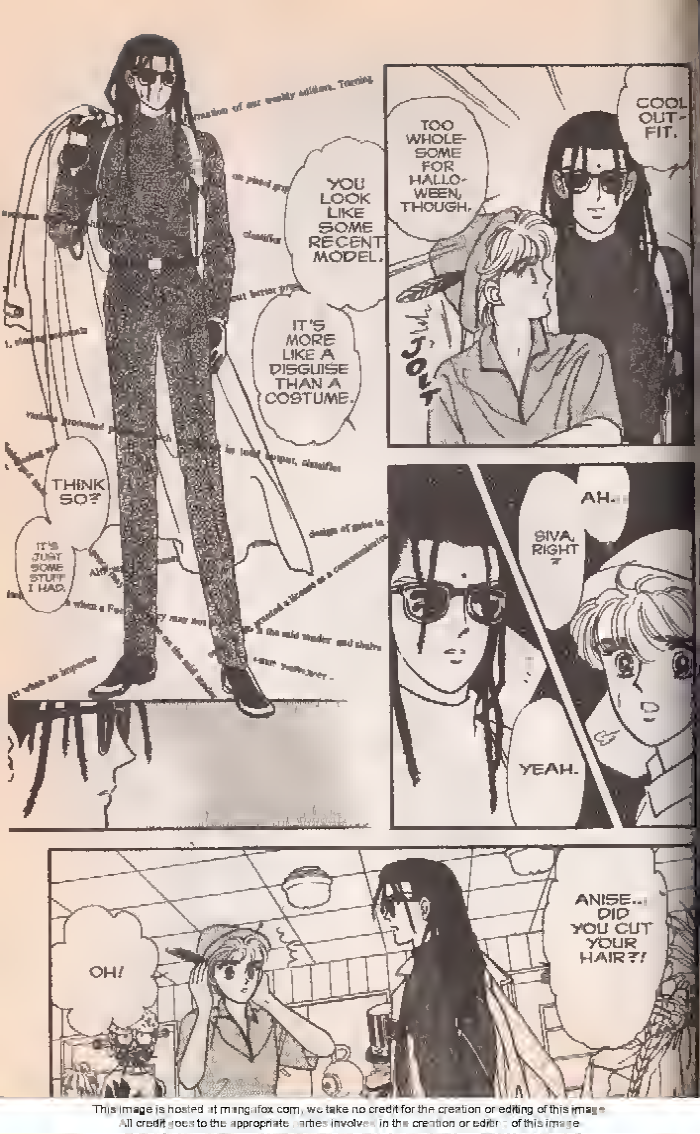

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ARE YOU STILL FIGHTING WITH CIPHER?
IS THAT WHY?
IT FEELS SO LIGHT NOW.
YOU NOTICED PRETTY QUICK!
NO WAY!
I JUST FELT LIKE I WANTED A CHANGE.
I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS AT FAULT.
I THINK I MADE HIM MAD.
CLASSES ARE STARTING.
LET'S GO

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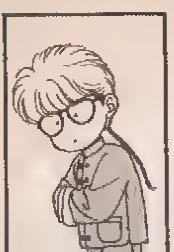
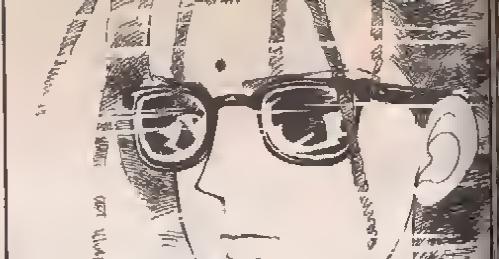


CULTURES OF THE WORLD SERIES, NO. 1

AS MAO STARTED UP AND CAME VOLUMES 3 AND 4 HIT THE STANDS, I GOT THE FEELING THAT THE NUMBER OF NEW READERS SHOT UP QUICKLY UNTIL NOW MOST OF MY FANS WROTE THAT "I'VE BEEN READING YOUR WORK EVER SINCE YOU DEBUTED". I WAS PRETTY SURPRISED, BUT NOW MANY OF THEM SAY THEY ONLY READ THE BOOKS NOT **LALA MAGAZINE**. FROM NOW ON, I'LL TRY TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS I'VE GOTTEN FROM THESE PEOPLE

× × ×

THIS TIME, I'M DRESSING CAMEL HERE IN A "CULTURES OF THE WORLD" SERIES CHOSEN FROM THE READERS' REQUESTS.



BAM!
ROY!
ANISE IS IN TROU-BLE!
WH--WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IN TROUBLE? WHAT HAPPENED?
I'LL EXPLAIN LATER! PUT ON THIS OUTFIT AND GET TO SCHOOL AS FAST AS YOU CAN!

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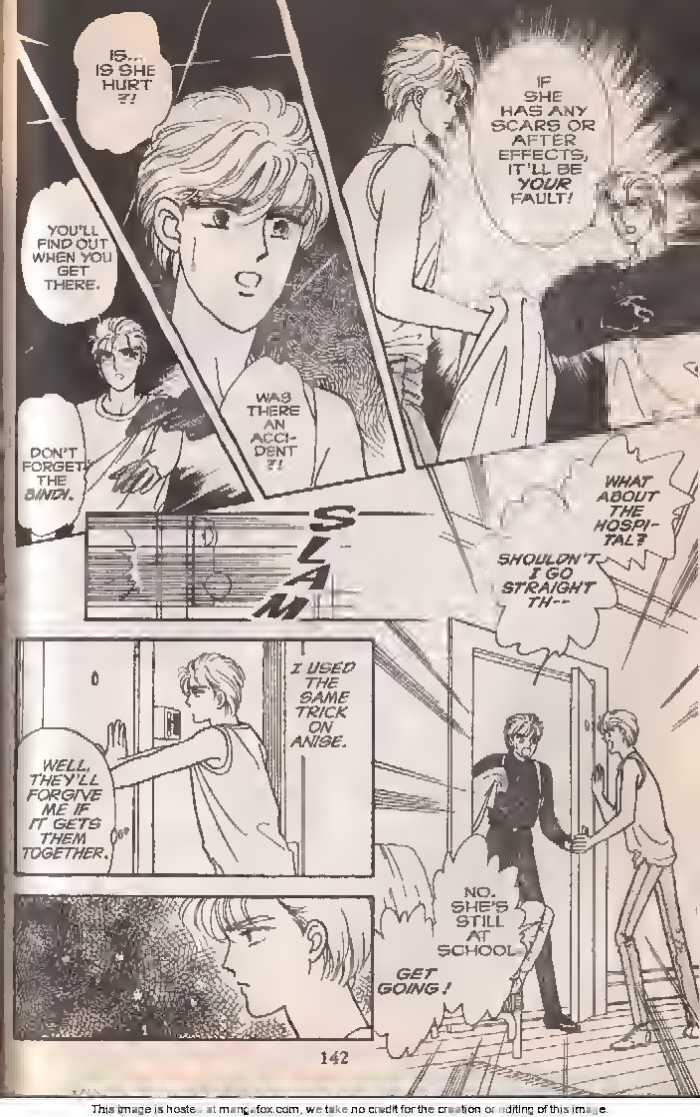
IS... IS SHE HURT ?!
YOU'LL FIND OUT WHEN YOU GET THERE.
WAS THERE AN ACCI-DENT ?!
DON'T FORGET THE BINDY.
IF SHE HAS ANY SCARS OR AFTER EFFECTS, IT'LL BE YOUR FAULT!
SLAM
WHAT ABOUT THE HOSPI-TAL?
SHOULDN'T I GO STRAIGHT TH--
I USED THE SAME TRICK ON ANISE.
WELL, THEY'LL FORGIVE ME IF IT GETS THEM TOGETHER.
NO. SHE'S STILL AT SCHOOL
GET GOING!

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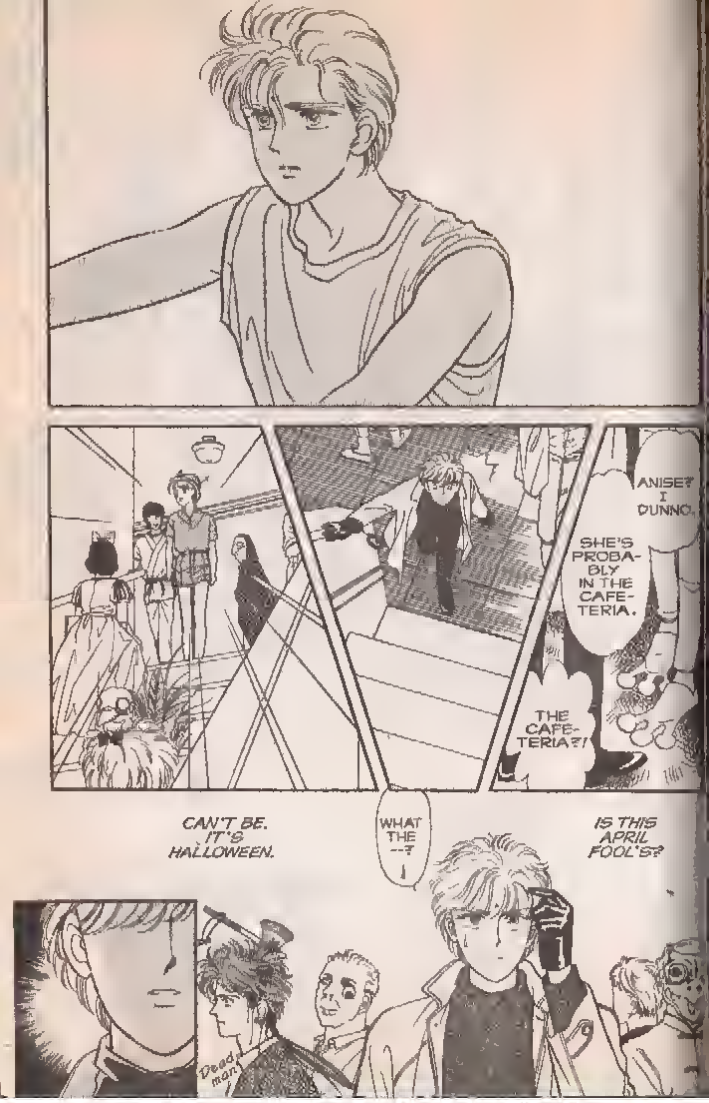

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!
ZING
I JUST MISSED THE STEP.
NAH ... I'M FINE.
ARE YOU OKAY? DID YOU HIT SOMETHING?
IT'S OKAY. I CAN GO BY MYSELF.
NO, C'MON. JUST TAKE MY...
HERE. HOLD MY ARM.
YOU'D BETTER GO TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE.
LOOK, YOU'RE LIMPING!
I SAID I'M FINE!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

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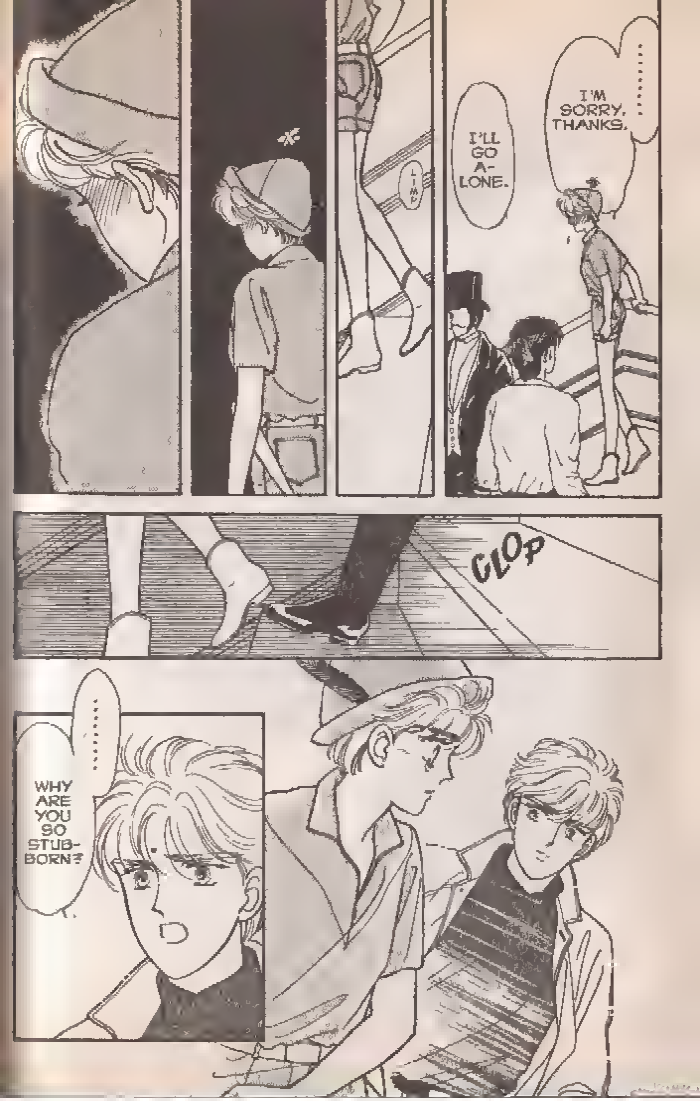

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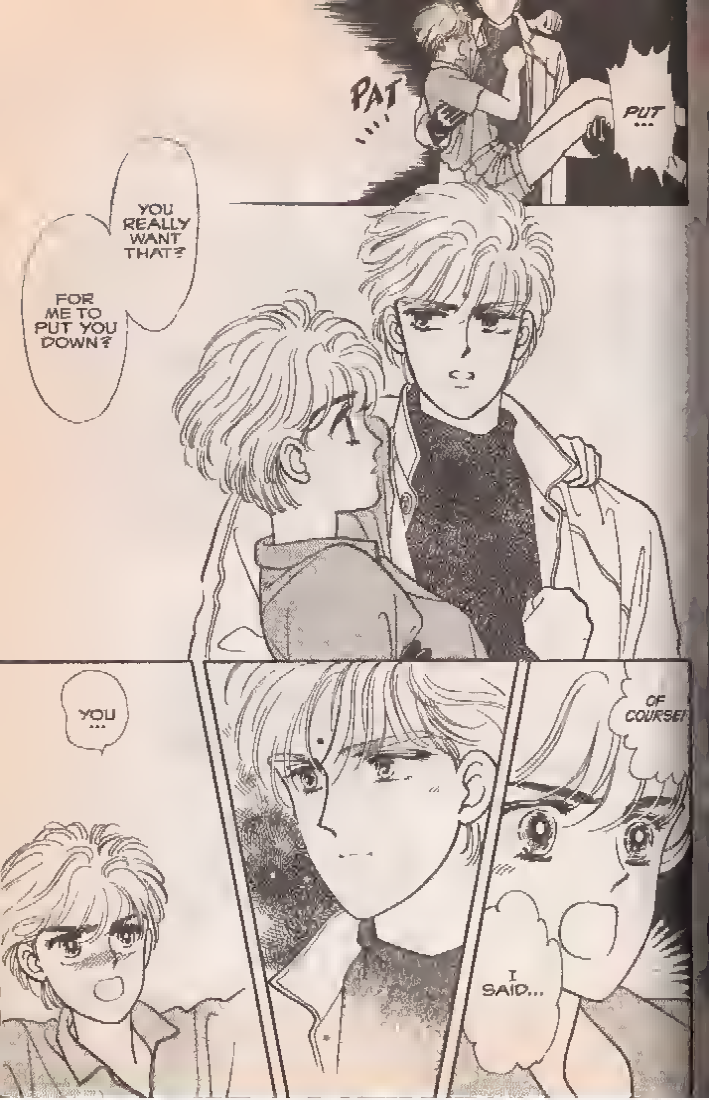

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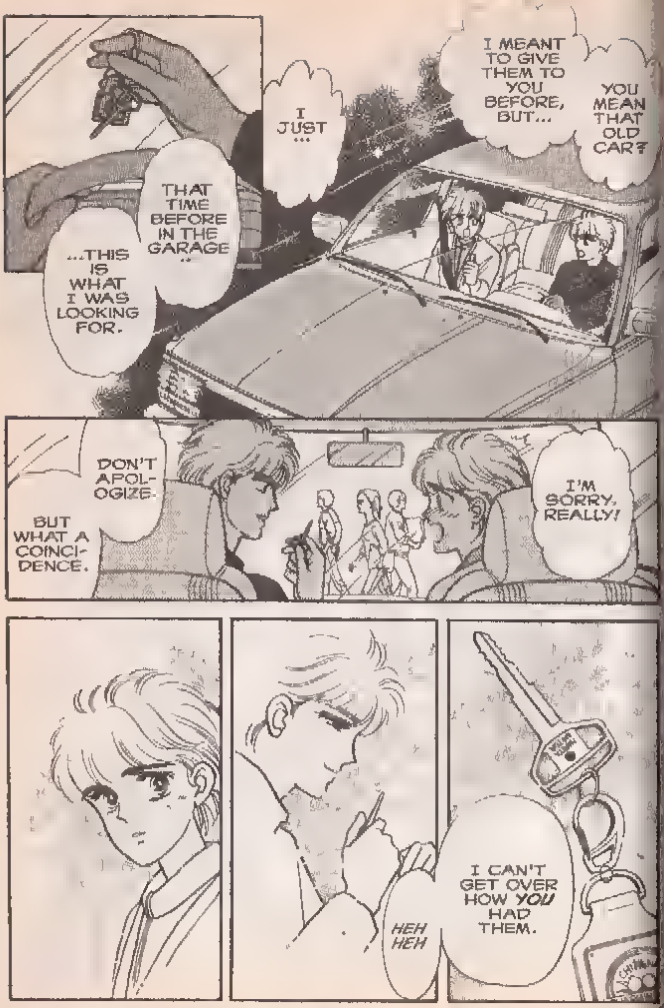
I MEANT TO GIVE THEM TO YOU BEFORE, BUT...
YOU MEAN THAT OLD CAR?
I JUST ...
THAT TIME BEFORE IN THE GARAGE ...
...THIS IS WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR.
I'M SORRY, REALLY!
DON'T APOL-OGIZE.
BUT WHAT A COINCI-DENCE.
I CAN'T GET OVER HOW YOU HAD THEM.
HEH HEH

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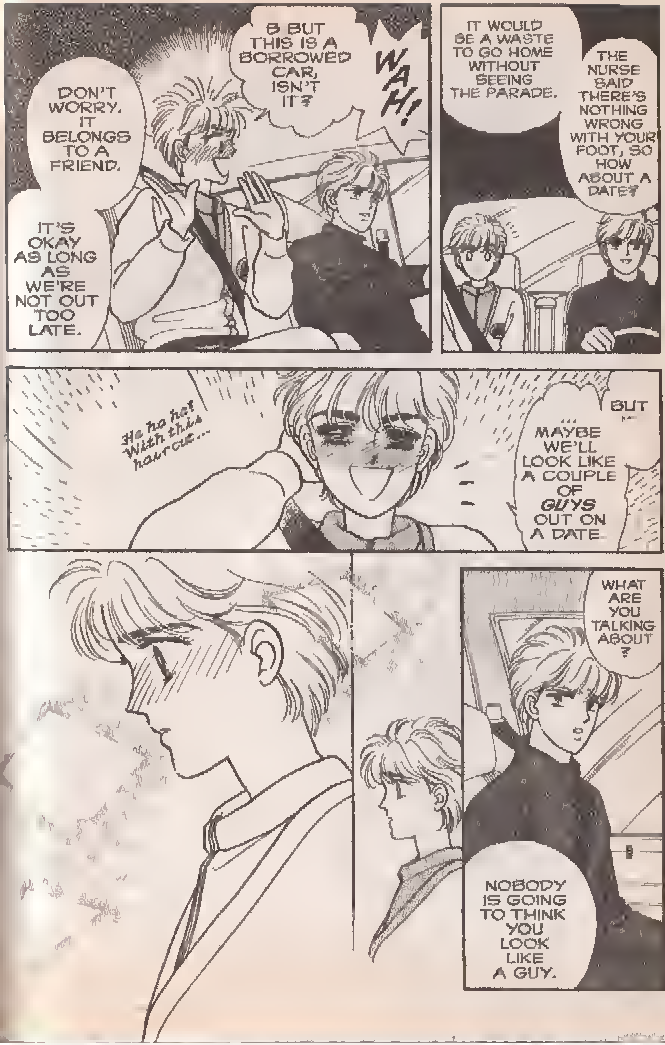
DON'T WORRY. IT BELONGS TO A FRIEND.
B BUT THIS IS A BORROWED CAR, ISN'T IT?
WAH!
IT'S OKAY AS LONG AS WE'RE NOT OUT TOO LATE.
IT WOULD BE A WASTE TO GO HOME WITHOUT SEEING THE PARADE.
THE NURSE SAID THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOUR FOOT, SO HOW ABOUT A DATE?
He he he! With this haircut...
BUT I- ... MAYBE WE'LL LOOK LIKE A COUPLE OF GUYS OUT ON A DATE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
NOBODY IS GOING TO THINK YOU LOOK LIKE A GUY.

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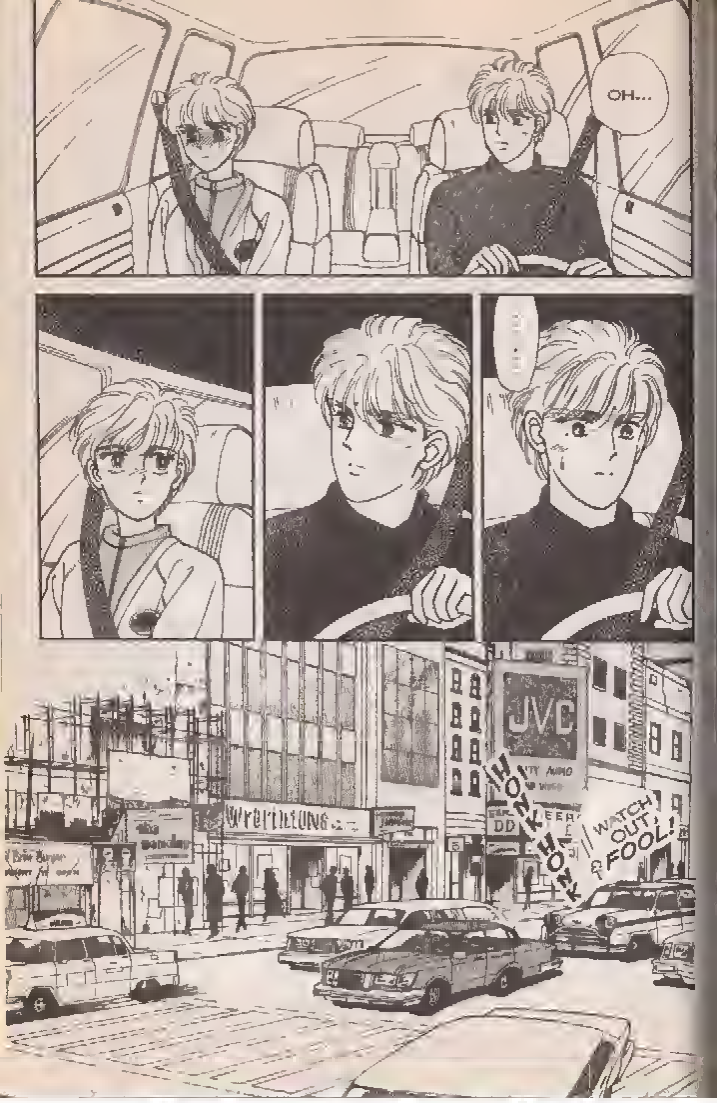

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CIPHER
#137
IF YOU THINK LIKE THAT THERE'S NO LIMIT TO HOW FAR YOU CAN FALL
THERE'S NO TOP OR BOTTOM LIMITS.
THE RICH AND THE PO CHARITY AN DRUGS, SUCCESS A FAILURE
I'M STILL AT THE STARTING POINT SQUARE ONE
I CAN STILL CHOOSE EITHER ONE OF THEM
AS LONG AS I DON'T GIVE UP, I CAN STILL MAKE IT TO THE TOP.

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WHAT THE .
BAM
HEY, ROY. WAKE UP.
UHHH.
MORNING, ANISE! WHEN DID YOU GET HERE?
I CAN'T WAKE UP IF YOU DON'T GIVE ME A KISS
NOW GET UP. TIME TO GET OUT OF BED.
SPREAD ON TOP? FINE.
I WANT SOME YO-GURT.
WITH ICE CREAM AND RAISINS.

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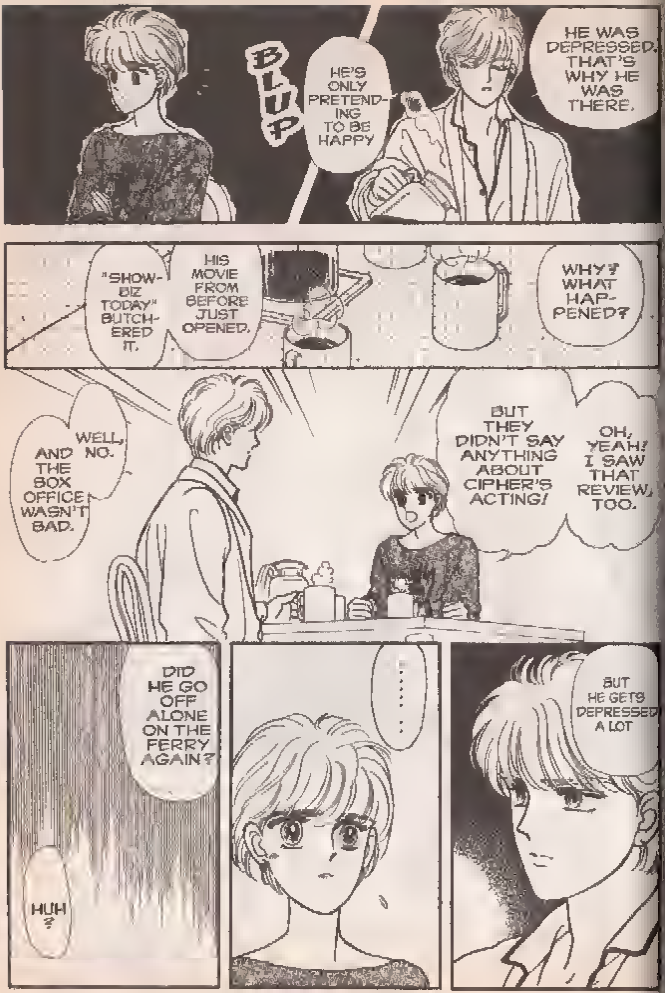
BLIP
HE'S ONLY PRETENDING TO BE HAPPY
HE WAS DEPRESSED. THAT'S WHY HE WAS THERE.
"SHOW-BIZ TODAY" BUTCHERED IT.
HIS MOVIE FROM BEFORE JUST OPENED.
WHY? WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL, AND NO. THE BOX OFFICE WASN'T BAD.
BUT THEY DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT CIPHER'S ACTING!
OH, YEAH! I SAW THAT REVIEW, TOO.
DID HE GO OFF ALONE ON THE FERRY AGAIN?
HUH?
.....
BUT HE GETS DEPRESSED A LOT

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BUT FROM NOW ON, WE'VE DECIDED TO BE *OPEN* ABOUT HOW WE LIVE TOGETHER.
YEAH, THAT.
WHAT ABOUT US?
YOU MEAN ABOUT LIVING TO-GETH-ERT
YOU KNOW, UP TILL NOW WE'VE PRETENDED THAT CIPHER JUST COMES OVER NOW AND THEN.
IT JUST MEANS THAT SOMETIMES JAKE WILL HAVE TO PRETEND HE'S CIPHER.
TOTALLY DIFFERENT! IT MEANS WHEN ONE GOES OUT, THE OTHER DOESN'T HAVE TO HIDE ANYMORE.
AND?! HOW IS THAT ANY DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE?
WHAT HAPPENS THEN?
IN SIX MONTHS...
...WE GRADU-ATE.
IT'LL BE A LITTLE MORE COMPLICATED THAN BEFORE BUT JUST FOR SIX MORE MONTHS.
AND THE ONE WHO STAYS HOME WILL BE CIPHER.
WE'LL KEEP TAKING TURNS GOING TO SCHOOL.
SAME WHEN WE'RE WORKING.
NOVEMBER
JAKE
ROY

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JAKE WANTS TO GO ON TO COLLEGE, BUT NOT ME.
I WANT TO KEEP ACTING, BUT JAKE WANTS TO QUIT.
WE GO BACK TO BEING TWO PEOPLE.
SO WHEN WE GRADUATE, WE STOP LIVING LIKE THIS.
WHY HAVE YOU GONE TO ALL THIS TROUBLE CONCEALING CIPHER'S EXISTENCE?
IT'S MADE THINGS HARD AT WORK AND SCHOOL.
W-WAIT A SEC-OND.
I'M NOT QUITE SURE I GET THIS.

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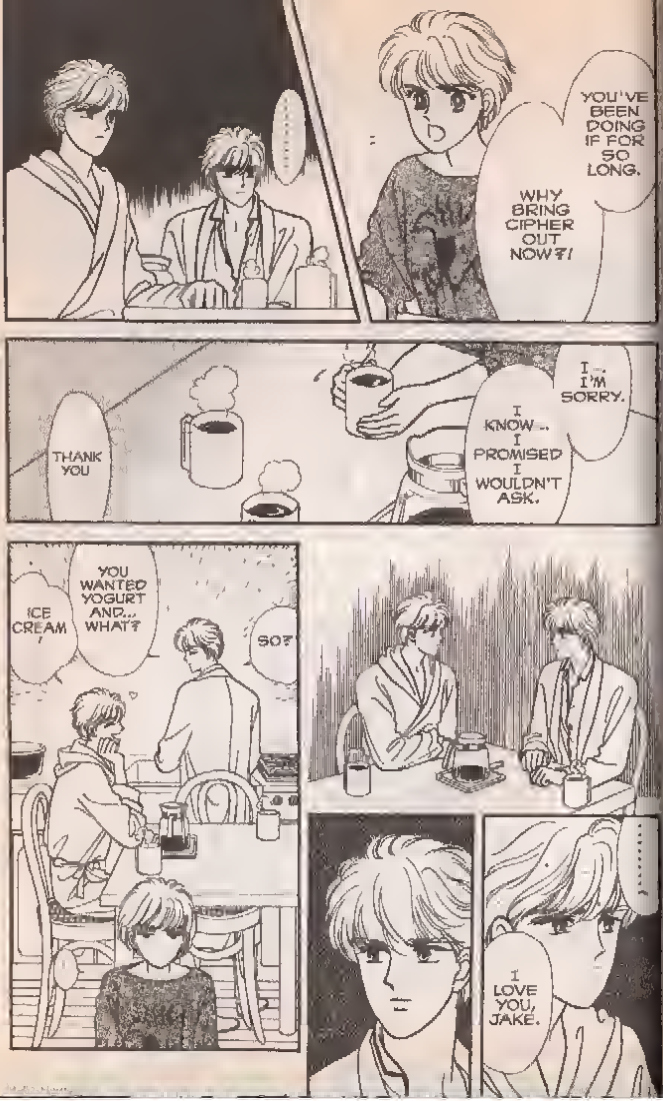
YOU'VE BEEN DOING IF FOR SO LONG.
WHY BRING CIPHER OUT NOW?!
I... I'M SORRY.
I KNOW... I PROMISED I WOULDN'T ASK.
THANK YOU
YOU WANTED YOGURT AND... WHAT?
ICE CREAM
SO?
I LOVE YOU, JAKE.

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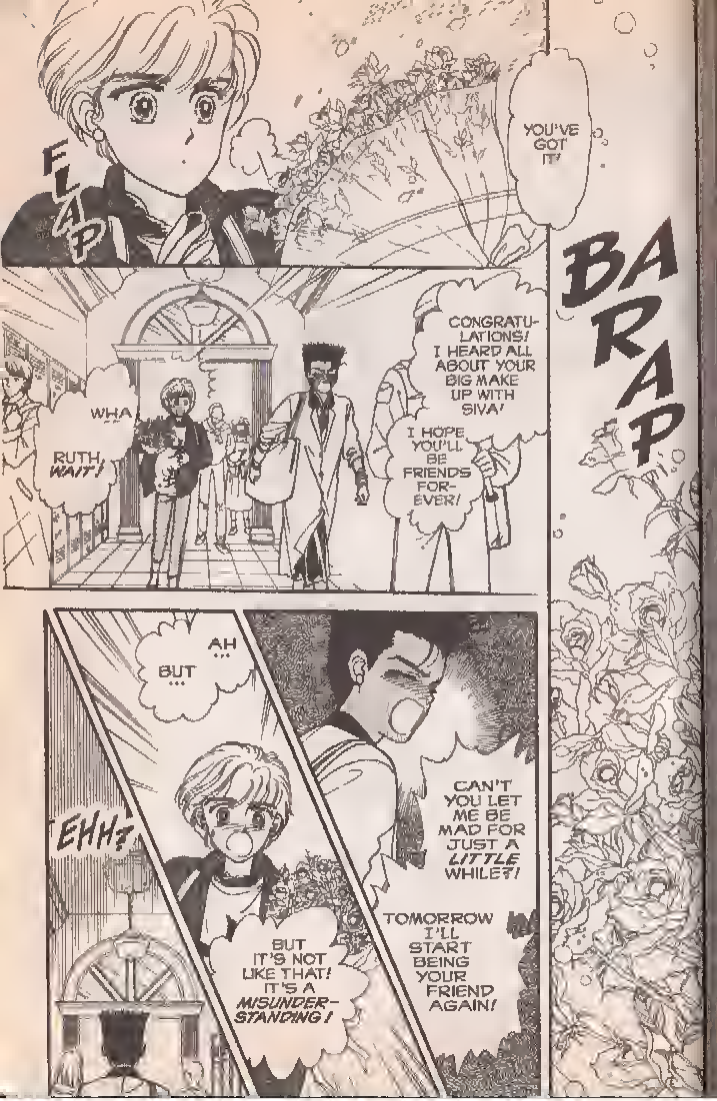
FLAP
YOU'VE GOT IT!
BARAP
WHA
RUTH, WAIT!
CONGRATULATIONS! I HEARD ALL ABOUT YOUR BIG MAKE UP WITH SIVA!
I HOPE YOU'LL BE FRIENDS FOREVER!
AH ...
BUT ...
EHH?
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THAT! IT'S A MISUNDERSTANDING!
CAN'T YOU LET ME BE MAD FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE?!
TOMORROW I'LL START BEING YOUR FRIEND AGAIN!

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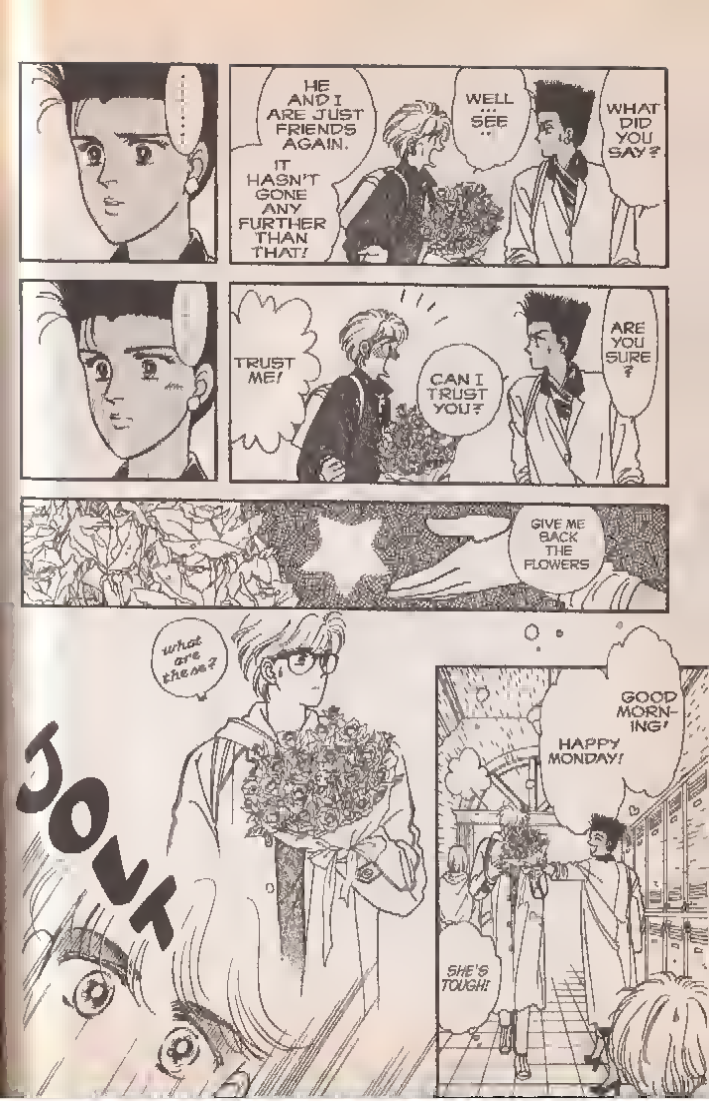

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BUT WHATEVER IT WAS, YOU'RE ACTING GUILTY.
SO WHAT WAS IT?
BUSTED
GASP
大将
DID YOU HEAR WHAT WE WERE SAYING?
WHAT'S UP?
NO, I DIDN'T.
I'M... I'M SORRY!
I TOLD HER I'M JUST FRIENDS WITH SIVA!
B-BUT AT SCHOOL, YOU'RE NOT "CIPHER," SO I COULDN'T TELL HER...
OH...
IS THAT ALL?

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YEAH, BUT...
THAT'S WHY YOU SAID THAT TO HER, ISN'T IT?
UH... YEAH
I WAS GOING TO SAY THAT MYSELF.
IF WE DON'T ACT LIKE FREIND'S IN PUBLIC, IT WILL CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR JAKE
SIMPLE MINDS
I WAS THINKING ABOUT APOLOGIZING TO THE GUY I'VE BEEN EATING WITH AND BREAK THINGS OFF.
SO SHOULD WE KEEP THINGS AS THEY ARE FOR LUNCH?
REALLY?! GREAT!
OR MAYBE YOU'D PREFER JUST THE TWO...
KLANG
KLANG
SURE
WHY DON'T WE ALL EAT TOGETHER?
I COULD JOIN, TOO.
KLAK

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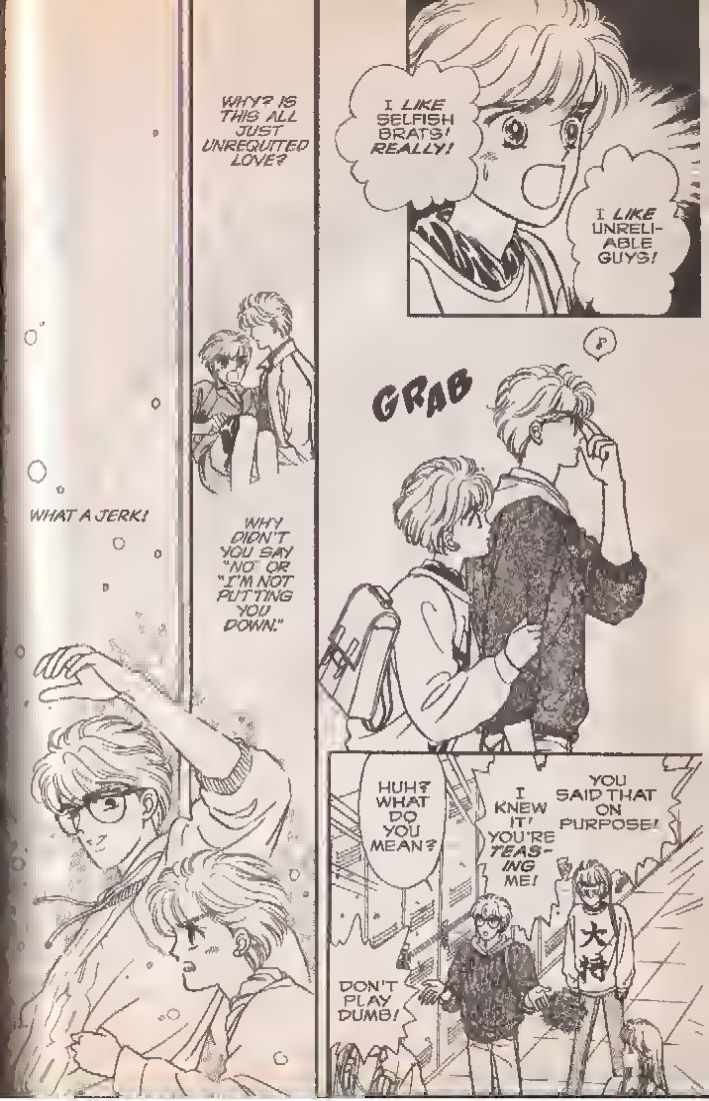
I LIKE SELFISH BRATS! REALLY!
I LIKE UNRELI-ABLE GUYS!
WHY? IS THIS ALL JUST UNREQUITED LOVE?
GRAB
WHAT A JERK!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY "NO" OR "I'M NOT PUTTING YOU DOWN."
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I KNEW IT! YOU'RE TEASING ME!
YOU SAID THAT ON PURPOSE!
DON'T PLAY DUMB!

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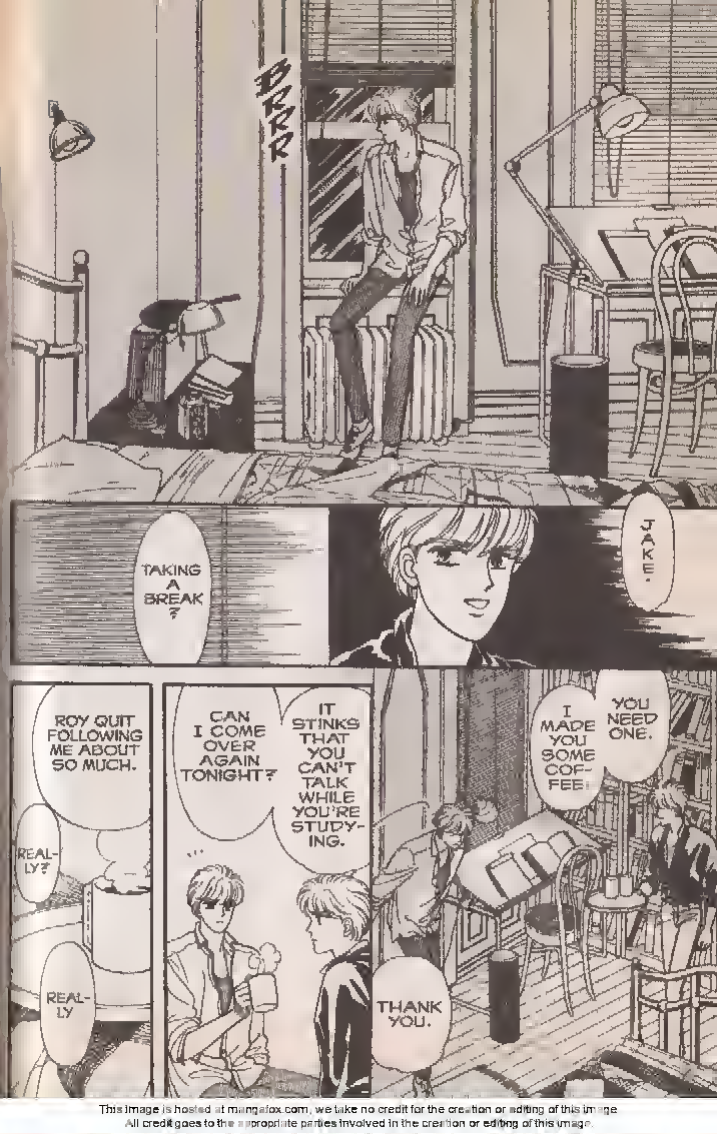

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IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT ME, DON'T BE.
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME THAT?
THAT ONLY BOTHERS ME.
JAKE, IS IT OKAY IF I GO OUT EVERY DAY WITH ANISE?
IF YOU NEED TO TALK, TALK TO ANISE.
IF YOU DON'T VALUE HER, SHE'LL THROW YOU AWAY.
NO... THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL!
IN OUR WHOLE LIVES, WE HAVEN'T BEEN APART FOR EVEN THREE DAYS.
WHAT ARE YOU *THINKING*, JAKE?
JAKE, CAN'T YOU BE *A LITTLE* LONELY FOR MY SAKE?

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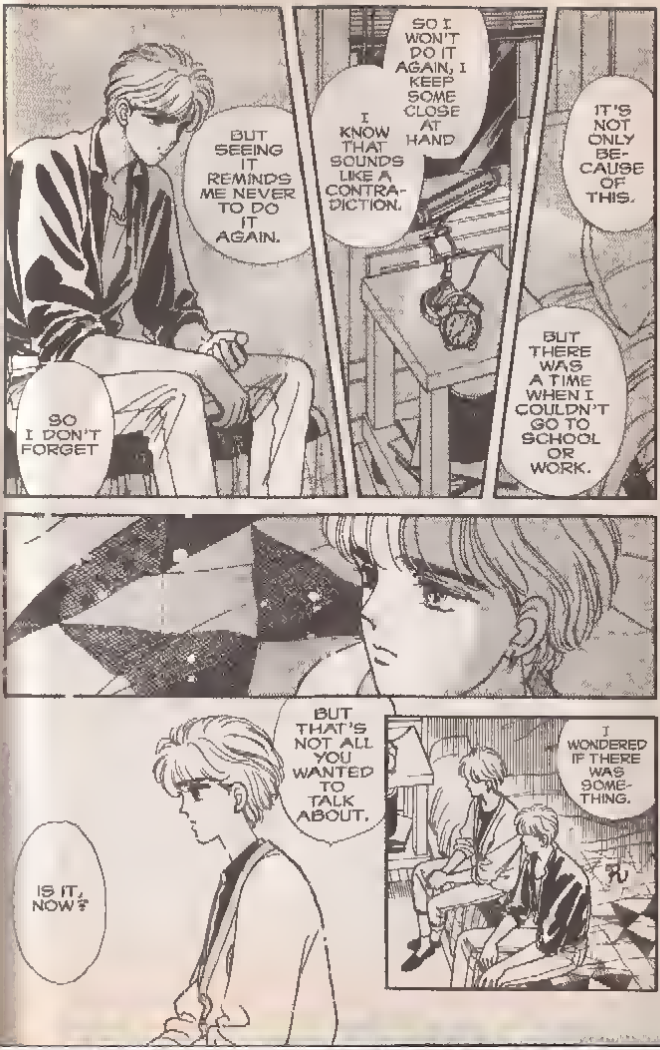
BUT SEEING IT REMINDS ME NEVER TO DO IT AGAIN.
SO I DON'T FORGET
I KNOW THAT SOUNDS LIKE A CONTRA-DICTION.
SO I WON'T DO IT AGAIN, I KEEP SOME CLOSE AT HAND
IT'S NOT ONLY BE-CAUSE OF THIS.
BUT THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I COULDN'T GO TO SCHOOL OR WORK.
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL YOU WANTED TO TALK ABOUT.
IS IT, NOW?
I WONDERED IF THERE WAS SOME-THING.

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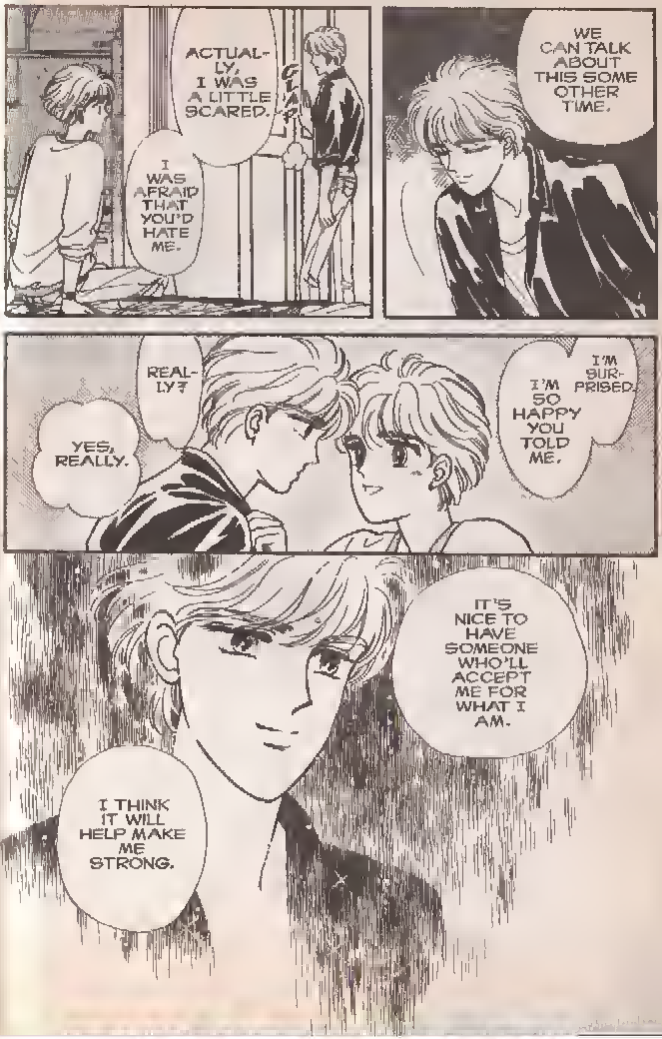
I WAS AFRAID THAT YOU'D HATE ME.
ACTUALLY, I WAS A LITTLE SCARED.
GLARE
WE CAN TALK ABOUT THIS SOME OTHER TIME.
YES, REALLY.
REALLY?
I'M SURPRISED.
I'M SO HAPPY YOU TOLD ME.
IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE WHO'LL ACCEPT ME FOR WHAT I AM.
I THINK IT WILL HELP MAKE ME STRONG.

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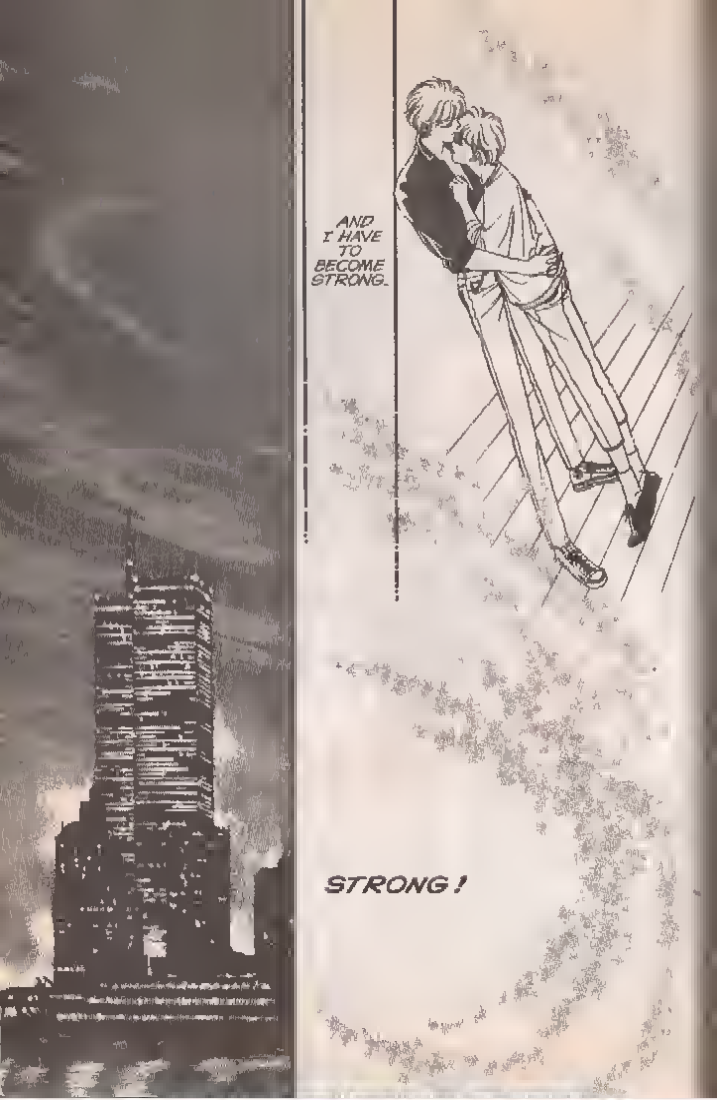

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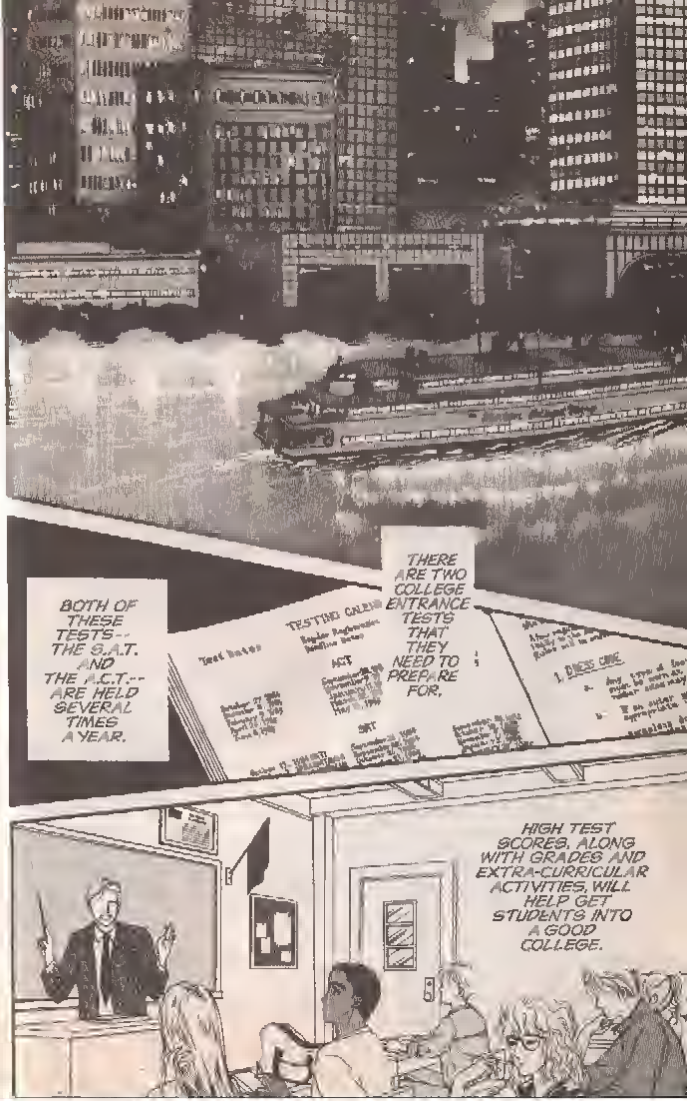
BOTH OF THESE TESTS-- THE S.A.T. AND THE A.C.T.-- ARE HELD SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR.
THERE ARE TWO COLLEGE ENTRANCE TESTS THAT THEY NEED TO PREPARE FOR,
HIGH TEST SCORES, ALONG WITH GRADES AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, WILL HELP GET STUDENTS INTO A GOOD COLLEGE.

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THE APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR MOST SCHOOLS IS JANUARY FOURTH.
IN NOVEMBER...
...MOST APPLICANTS ARE EXTREMELY BUSY.
JAKE IS BUSY WRITING HIS APPS AND PREPPING FOR THE TESTS.
WE'LL TAKE IT EASY FOR THANKSGIVING.
COLUMBIA.
SCRAPE SCRAPE
OH, REALLY?
WHAT'S HIS FIRST CHOICE?

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COLUMBIA
HE DOESN'T WANT TO LEAVE MANHATTAN.
SO THAT MAKES IT COLUMBIA.
SCRAPE
HE'LL GET IN. HE'S PRETTY SMART.
WHAT ARE HIS CHANCES?
THAT'S GOING TO BE HARD TO GET INTO.
REALLY? I DIDN'T KNOW!
WELL, IT'S MOSTLY SMALL JOBS.
A LOT THROUGH SIVA'S CONNECTIONS
RECENTLY, I'VE BEEN GETTING A LOT OF WORK WITH THE NAME "ROY RANG."
WHAT WILL YOU DO, CIPHER?
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A STRANGER, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE TWINS.
Light Mist/Paper tapped to a Lock
Then a flash of pink and the girl is at least fascinated
I'LL GO TO ACTING CLASSES AND TAKE ALL THE AUDITIONS I CAN GET.

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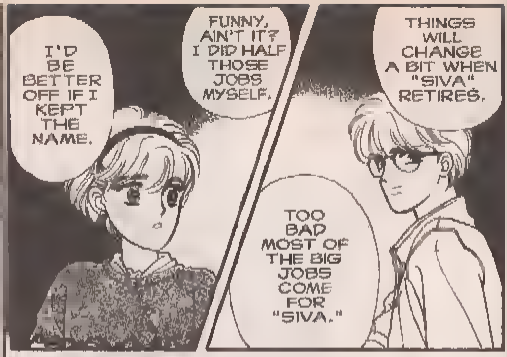
CULTURES OF THE WORLD SERIES, NO. 2

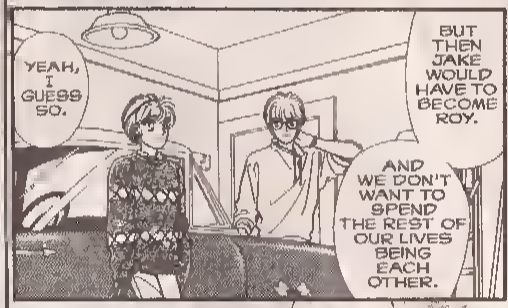
FIRST, HERE'S MY ADDRESS!

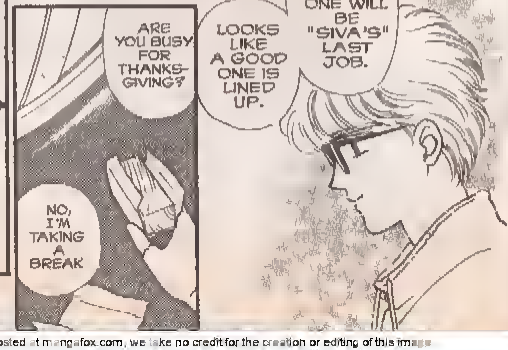
NARITA MINAKO
C/O CMX/WILDSTORM
888 PROSPECT ST
SUITE 240
LA JOLLA CA 92037

IT TAKES A LONG TIME FOR LETTERS TO REACH ME SO PLEASE DON'T SEND ANYTHING PERISHABLE! OTHERWISE THEY STINK WHEN I OPEN THEM.

I'M WAITING FOR YOUR LETTERS!


I'D BE BETTER OFF IF I KEPT THE NAME.
FUNNY, AIN'T IT? I DID HALF THOSE JOBS MYSELF.
THINGS WILL CHANGE A BIT WHEN "SIVA" RETIRES.
TOO BAD MOST OF THE BIG JOBS COME FOR "SIVA."





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DON'T YOU HAVE TO GO TO YOUR MOTHER'S HOUSE OR SOMETHING?
THANKS, BUT—
IT'S THE ONLY TIME THE WHOLE FAMILY GETS TOGETHER.
NO, THEY'RE ALL COMING HERE.
. . . .
WELL, THEN YOU CAN COME TO MY HOUSE!
YOU AND SIVA CAN COME TOGETHER, IF YOU DON'T HAVE PLANS!
DON'T YOU HAVE TO GO TO YOUR PARENTS' HOUSE?
UH-
SO MAYBE WE WILL SHOW UP.
I'LL ASK JAKE ABOUT IT.
NO
WE DON'T GET TOGETHER

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.....
JAKE.
DID YOU NOTICE THAT ANISE LIKED ME A LONG TIME AGO?
NO, I'M OKAY.
YOU'LL CRAWL IN EVEN IF I SAY, "NO," WON'T YOU?
CAN I GET IN WITH YOU?
READY FOR BED?
YOU COLD?
HERE'S A BLANKET TO KEEP YOU WARM.
WHAT? THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
WOULD YOU HAVE WANTED ME TO TELL HER YOU LIKE HER?
WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?
THE ONLY ONE WHO DIDN'T NOTICE WAS YOU.

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WELL...
I'M NERV-OUS
HM?
IT FEELS SO STRANGE, JAKE.
LATELY, I HAVEN'T HAD ANY IDEA WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
DID YOU COME IN HERE JUST TO SAY THAT?
MAYBE SOMETIME SOON I'LL BE ABLE TO DISCUSS IT.
Well...I mean...
WHAT DOES ?

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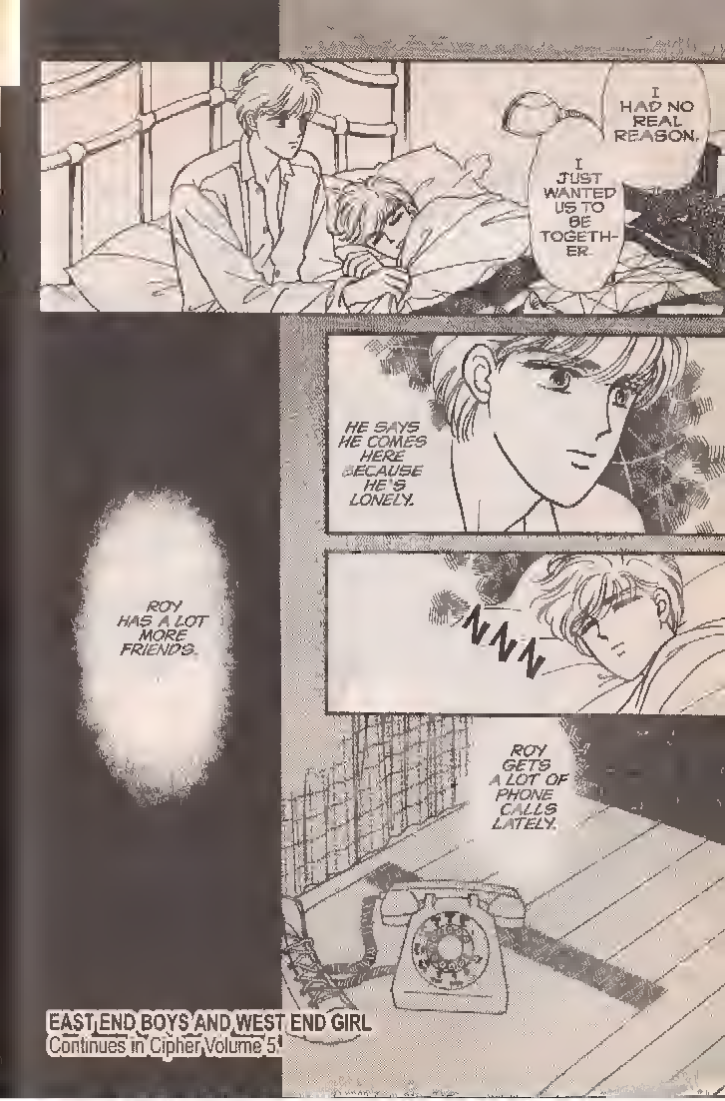
I HAD NO REAL REASON.
I JUST WANTED US TO BE TOGETH-ER.
HE SAYS HE COMES HERE BECAUSE HE'S LONELY.
NNNN
ROY HAS A LOT MORE FRIENDS.
ROY GETS A LOT OF PHONE CALLS LATELY.
EAST END BOYS AND WEST END GIRL
Continues in Cipher Volume 5!

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WILL A NEW GIRL BREAK UP THE TWINS?
FIND OUT IN OCTOBER!

By Minako Narita. Cipher and Siva have shared one identity for years. But, lately they are discovering that their individual wants and needs are becoming harder to suppress and that sharing an identity might now be too much of a limitation. Especially when Cipher takes an acting role away from Siva, who wants to get closer to the female lead. Will the twins be able to keep up their secret without anyone getting hurt?

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